DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 342 907 CE 060 435

TITLE	PASSAGE. "Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter." Fiscal Year 1990-1991. Ten Issues.
INSTITUTION	Midland Center, Inc., PA.
SPONS AGENCY	Pennsylvania State Dept. of Education, Harrisburg. Div. of Adult Basic and Literacy Education Programs.
PUB DATE	91
NOTE	107p.; For the 1989-90 issues, see ED 324 473.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Serials (022)
JOURNAL CIT	PASSAGE; Sep 1990-Jun 1991
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Academic Failure; Adult Basic Education; Adult Literacy; Career Counseling; Communication Skills; *Employment Potential; Employment Problems; Job Placement; *Job Search Methods; *Job Skills; Job Training; Labor Market; *Literacy Education; *Newsletters; Occupational Surveys; Self Help Programs
IDENTIFIERS	353 Project; *Workplace Literacy

ABSTRACT

This document consists of 10 issues of a workplace and job-skills information newsletter specifically designed for adult education program practitioners and their students. A report preceding the newsletters notes that the 1990-91 newsletters were issued to 2,200 program administrators, directors, counselors, volunteers, and their students. PASSAGE assists adult learners with making decisions about career options, described higher education and job training opportunities, and provided examples of building communication skills. PASSAGE offers information for adult educators on helping students to overcome academic and employment barriers. This document contains 10 issues of the newsletter, from September 1990 to June 1991, covering 20 subject areas: expectations in today's workplace; job search tools; highlighting careers; employment/educational services; developing workplace communication skills; teamwork in the classroom/workplace; higher education opportunities; technology in the workplace; information for instructors; self-help/inspirational articles; workplace terms and definitions; labor market surveys/projections; success stories; reader input; the student access page--an insert used as a hands-on employment/educational skills' tool for the classroom; career development tools; on-the-job skills; innovative classroom activities; and job search campaign exercises. (NLA)

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PASSAGE

"Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter"

Fiscal Year 1990-1991
Project Number 98-1039
Federal Allocation: $23,000

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Abstract

PASSAGE, Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter, is an innovative vocational resource for Pennsylvania's adult basic and literacy education programs. Ten (10) issues, six to eight (6 to 8) pages in length, were distributed during the 1990-1991 fiscal year to two thousand two-hundred (2,200) program administrators, directors, counselors, volunteers, and their students.

The Midland Center, Inc., in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Education's 353 Task Force, identified the need for career-guidance information which had statewide application and met specific standards of responsible journalism (i.e., an in-depth understanding of adult-learner populations, namely their educational/vocational needs).

The 1990-1991 PASSAGE series, through its main articles and supplemental information, met those standards. PASSAGE assisted adult learners with making decisions about their career options, helped them discover their potential for higher education and training opportunities, and demonstrated for them how to progress toward gainful employment. Most importantly, PASSAGE offered experienced-based information from individuals who care about adult learners and wish to teach them how to overcome academic/employment barriers which adversely affect their economic status.

The PASSAGE newsletter project also challenged its readers to participate in career- and job-related activities which build communication skills that are valued in today's workplaces (e.g., analytical thinking, problem solving, and decision making).

PASSAGE's innovative inserts, STUDENTaccesspages, were especially designed to generate classroom discussions centered around the topics of finding work and improving work habits.

Research and development of information for inclusion in PASSAGE met strict criteria--and monthly planning strategies were employed to meet the objectives set forth in the proposal. Those strategies included: a) consulting experts in the fields of adult education and training, b) featuring high-interest career fields, technological advances, and instructional paths affecting adult students, and c) relying heavily upon a mature understanding of the life/work processes adult learners encounter as they strive to better themselves personally and financially.

In summary, the 1990-1991 PASSAGE newsletter project encouraged educators to discuss, develop, and implement vocational lessons which complement the academic remediation and training of adult learners who have enrolled in Pennsylvania's statewide system of adult basic and literacy education programs. Positive feedback about PASSAGE's utility, personality, and layout and design features motivated The Midland Center, Inc. to achieve and exceed the goals and objectives of the 1990-1991 newsletter project.

Introduction

PASSAGE, Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter

Its Purpose

The purpose of the 1990-1991 PASSAGE newsletter project was two-fold. First, The Midland Center, Inc. wanted to create a forum to disseminate workplace and job-skills information which is "adult-learner ready", ensuring that PASSAGE's articles and exercises would be used by instructors, tutors, and students in educational settings throughout the Commonwealth. Secondly, the newsletter had to reflect the collective and successful experiences of Pennsylvania's business and education communities, presenting subject material which represented current trends in worker-education and training programs.

Our Rationale

The Midland Center, Inc.'s rationale for choosing a workplace and job-skills newsletter format was presented to the Pennsylvania Department of Education after a careful review of similar publications available in commercial markets. Many of the workplace-literacy materials, however noteworthy or appropriate, did not match the focus and variety of vocational subjects which The Midland Center, Inc. deemed important to the training/development needs of Pennsylvania's adult-learner populations (i.e., the predominant use of the personal "you" voice for article formation and repeated themes of workplace/job-skills information reflecting labor-management needs and expectations).

PASSAGE's Audiences

During 1989-1990, the Pennsylvania Department of Education's interest in workplace-literacy initiatives prompted their support of the PASSAGE newsletter, and that support continued into the 1990-1991 project year with renewed enthusiasm for the classification of newsletter which PASSAGE had become for its target audiences.

Ongoing input and congratulations from the PDE's 353 advisory group, Dave Fluke, Editor of What's the BUZZ?, and PASSAGE's readership helped to promote The Midland Center, Inc.'s conviction that there was a real need for comprehensive workplace and job-skills information geared toward ABE-GED students.

Adult learners, classroom instructors, vocational counselors, and program volunteers discovered practical ways to introduce PASSAGE to their academic curriculums and student services. Adult-education centers throughout Pennsylvania adopted PASSAGE as a free and valuable resource for their program-planning needs. Inquiries from across the United States about subscriptions to PASSAGE were frequent as Pennsylvania's readers shared the newsletter with out-of-state ABE/GED programs and individuals.

PASSAGE's Publication Team

A part-time managing editor monitored the overall operations of the PASSAGE newsletter project. This individual made editorial assignments, wrote articles and exercises for the newsletter, assumed proofreading responsibilities, and assured that PASSAGE was meeting the goals and objectives set forth in the 1990-1991 proposal to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, 353 Special Demonstration Projects, Mr. Dan Partin, Advisor.

A part-time publication editor/desktop-publishing specialist also performed writing and proofreading responsibilities. This individual coordinated activities related to the research and development of articles for PASSAGE (i.e., conversed with statewide ABE/GED associates for information of relevance to target audiences). Camera-ready editions of PASSAGE were prepared and distributed under the direction of the publication editor/desktop-publishing specialist.

A part-time technical/clerical assistant completed word-processing assignments, bulk-mailing procedures, database entry and retrieval work, and general clerical/public-relations duties (i.e., PASSAGE's phone surveys).

A team of Volunteers In Service To America (VISTAs) assisted The Midland Center, Inc. with bulk-mailing responsibilities. These individuals were instrumental in the timely delivery of PASSAGE (by stapling, sorting, and adhering mailing labels to twenty-two thousand (22,000) first-run editions of PASSAGE, ten (10) monthly issues total).

PASSAGE's Time Frame/Work Schedule

During Week One, editorial assignments were made (occurred 60 days before the newsletter went to the print shop). Week Two offered time for the research and development of the editorial assignments (scheduled 46 days before the newsletter went to the printer). Revisions to the newsletter were made during Week Three when the editorial review process was completed (e.g., focus, grammar, spelling, punctuation of newsletter content areas). Week Four involved the design/desktop-publishing stage (approximately 39 days before newsletter went to the printer). In addition, Week Four was the time allotted for the selection of photographs/graphics deemed appropriate for inclusion in PASSAGE.

PASSAGE was delivered to the printer by the 15th of each month and mailed to its readership on, or before, the last day of each month (September through June, 1990-1991).

Additional Report Copies

Persons interested in obtaining additional copies of this report may contact:

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Literacy Education Programs
Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street, 6th Floor
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17126-0333

Annette McAlister
Clearinghouse Specialist
AdvancE
Pennsylvania Department of Education Resource Center
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17126-0333

The aforementioned individuals, along with The Midland Center, Inc., welcome any questions which would further develop an understanding of the 1990-1991 PASSAGE newsletter project.

Summary

Preparing a newsletter of PASSAGE's content and personality requires the wisdom of educators, business persons, and adult learners. These individuals have experienced, first-hand, the triumphs and tribulations of adults who have upgraded their training and education to achieve a level of financial security. Entailed in that collective wisdom is a genuine interest in helping others to overcome or cope with the hardships and barriers which adults often face as they encounter the challenges of securing employment in today's technologically-and academically-demanding workplaces.

The Midland Center, Inc. is very pleased to have had the opportunity to publish PASSAGE since 1989. We have experienced the rewards of seeing our vision for PASSAGE fulfilled through teamwork, enthusiasm, and the support of the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee. The encouragement of our readers, in union with The Midland Center, Inc.'s history of quality programs and services, has promoted PASSAGE's positive reception throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The Problem

Since 1980, Pennsylvania has experienced high unemployment rates in many of its counties which formerly depended on manufacturing industries for stable employment opportunities. The shift from manual-labor to service and/or technological-based jobs presents new challenges to Pennsylvania's undereducated and economically-disadvantaged populations, and new initiatives from those responsible for preparing them for the "world of work" were imperative.

The problem is there are few resources which take PASSAGE's approach to disseminate workplace and job-skills information geared specifically to the education, training, and employment needs of Pennsylvania's adult learners. PASSAGE, in newsletter format, offers information which increases the understanding of workplace trends and employment opportunities for adult learners.

The training and employment concerns of single parents, public-assistance recipients, special-needs populations (i.e., hearing impaired), the chronically unemployed, and recently dislocated workers are best addressed by business and education organizations which have made a commitment to improve the economic outlook of these groups. These organizations welcome a forum such as PASSAGE because it offers them a vehicle to share their ideas, concepts, knowledge, skills, and successes.

The Midland Center, Inc., with the assistance of the Pennsylvania Department of Education's 1990 data from their annual report to the Legislature, has concluded that 353 special-demonstration projects of PASSAGE's focus are necessary to improve the financial security of many Pennsylvanians who are benefitting from, or will benefit from, Act 143 programs (e.g., 30% receiving public assistance, 27% classified as displaced homemakers, and 36% were unemployed and available for work).

Goals and Objectives to Alleviate the Problem

PASSAGE was proposed to alleviate specific problems associated with the vocational training and employment needs of Pennsylvania's adult-learner populations. Overall goals and objectives assigned to the 1990-1991 PASSAGE newsletter project were as follows:

1. **PASSAGE had to be innovative.** To fulfill this goal, The Midland Center, Inc. developed a personal tone (personality) for the newsletter which was intended to speak directly to the reader in conversational language (i.e., Active Listening Will Help You In The Workplace, Communication Skills, PASSAGE, February 1991).

2. **PASSAGE had to offer instruction.** The editorial team was committed to the use of instructional practices which developed the readers' understanding of workplace and job-skills information. Emphasis was placed on a writing style which was clear, employed context clues to teach key-vocabulary words, and depicted examples for the reader to grasp new ideas, concepts, and skills.

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3. **PASSAGE had to challenge its readers.** Ideas and concepts are great discussion tools; however, PASSAGE was committed to taking ideas and concepts a step further to offer its readers ways to implement those ideas and concepts in adult basic and literacy-education classrooms and counseling settings (i.e., PASSAGE's STUDENTaccesspages). PASSAGE encouraged its readers to think about and discuss the relationship between their acquisition of solid basic skills and their likelihood for better training/employment opportunities.

4. **PASSAGE had to be accountable.** The Midland Center, Inc. accepted the responsibility of researching and developing information which was accurate and appropriate for PASSAGE's combined readership of ABE-GED practitioners and students. Editorial meetings evolved around the topics of a) checking out sources/resources, b) exploring training and employment theories and practices, and c) verifying if material promised immediate utility and statewide application.

5. **PASSAGE had to provide a network.** Sixty (60) individuals/programs were personally invited by The Midland Center, Inc. to provide workplace and job-skills information to PASSAGE's audience of 2200 (60 personal letters were addressed to program operators). Few responded to the written invitation which was later, in most cases, followed by a personal phone call. Many expressed interest in the newsletter; however, many cited time-management constraints as reasons why articles could not be submitted. To reach this objective, The Midland Center, Inc. worked closely with the program operators who did express an interest and wrote material (i.e., Need Help Finding A Job? Try the Library!, WORKPLACE Project, Carnegie Library and the City of Pittsburgh, PASSAGE, June 1991).

Procedures To Study/Attack The Problem

After the completion of the first program year of PASSAGE (1989-1990), the editors had obtained the knowledge and first-hand experience necessary to improve the newsletter and to better meet the needs of educational practitioners and adult students. During that first year, the PASSAGE network (educators, students, and business professionals) was established, and contact was made with the readers. The needs of PASSAGE's readers did not change for the 1990-1991 program year, and the PASSAGE staff was better prepared to meet those special needs (e.g., gained experience from 1989-1990 program year, established a network, and understood the target audiences).

The PASSAGE staff, after examining the first year, established a new set of goals that would help fine-tune the newsletter and expand the network. The four main areas PASSAGE chose to concentrate on for material were The Midland Center, Inc.'s professional staff (educators, counselors, employment advisors, and job developers), The Midland Center, Inc.'s resource library and network of businesses professionals, guest writers (PASSAGE network) from businesses, agencies, institutions, and educational/employment programs in Pennsylvania, and feedback from readers and the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Since 1983, The Midland Center, Inc., a non-profit training and development organization, has provided services to unemployed or underemployed individuals who need educational, employment, or job-skills training. The PASSAGE editors utilized the first-hand experience that The Midland Center, Inc.'s staff acquired from working with adults in the classroom and on a one-to-one basis.

Also, since 1987, The Midland Center, Inc. has provided technical/management assistance to The Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee. This association provided the PASSAGE editors with a valuable resource which could be used to provide adult learners with a unique and accurate perspective on employees' roles in today's labor markets.

The second area of concentration, The Midland Center, Inc.'s resource library and network of business professionals, was accessed to provide accurate and detailed information to the readers of PASSAGE. The resource library contains a variety of labor-management, career-development, educational, and job-search information. The Midland Center, Inc.'s network of career professionals includes educators, employees, managers, and directors from the public and private sector.

The third area of concentration, guest writers from PASSAGE's network, was of great importance to the editors. Guest writers added variety, credibility, and a unique viewpoint for the readers. Guest writers were contacted by letter and telephone. PASSAGE's contact with guest writers and educational practitioners provided the editorial staff with a better understanding of what services and special programs were being offered to adult learners and what may be of interest to the readers.

The last area of concentration, reader feedback and contact with Pennsylvania Department of Education, was essential to the success of the newsletter. By maintaining communication channels with the readers and the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the editors of PASSAGE could receive input on the newsletter's content and approach.

The Midland Center, Inc. circulated 2,200 copies of PASSAGE each month (10 issues or a total of 22,000 copies) to educators, program operators, and a limited number of select business professionals and heads of state departments of education.

Objectives Met In The PASSAGE Newsletter

PASSAGE was designed to provide a variety of educational, workplace, job-skill, and employment-related topics to assist adult-basic and literacy-education practitioners and ABE-GED students with career-development activities.

The main articles and informational side bars were written to provide the reader with a basic understanding of the subject matter that was presented in the newsletter. In addition, each article gave the reader a direction in which to conduct more research on a particular topic of interest. The articles served as a starting point to explore various employment and educational opportunities.

Much attention was given to gearing the information to our target audiences. Also, all articles presented in each issue of PASSAGE contained timely, accurate, and useful information for our target audiences.

Main Articles and Side Bars

In the 1990-1991 program year, ten issues of PASSAGE were published. Here is an overview of the different subject areas that were covered and the methods and sources that were used to write the articles.

Expectations In Today's Workplace

In today's everchanging workplace, employees are expected to understand their company's goals, make decisions, and accept more responsibilities. Utilizing the knowledge that The Midland Center, Inc. has acquired from personal on-the-job experience, from a network of local employers (job developing), and from various printed resources, PASSAGE provided readers with an accurate picture of what employers expect from their employees. Articles that were written on this topic include "Starting A New Job," September 1990, "Self-Directed Work Environments," September 1990, "Dealing Effectively With Complaints," October 1990, "Workplace Expectations," January 1991, "I Am Not That Type Of Person," March 1991, "What You Can Learn About Companies," May 1991, and "Appearance, Conduct, and Work Record," May 1991.

Job-Search Tools

With The Midland Center, Inc.'s experience in providing outplacement and educational services, the editors were able to present useful tips on preparing a successful job-search campaign. Some of the topics covered included resume-preparation tips, thank-you letters, job applications, dressing for the interview, and interviewing techniques. Examples of articles included "Eliminating Resume Writing Blues," September 1990, "Marketing Yourself," September 1990, "Cold Calling Employers," October 1990, "Practice and Preparation," December 1990, "When Job Opportunities Don't Knock," March 1991, "Tips On Preparing A Job Application," March 1991, "Responding To Help-Wanted Signs," June 1991, and "The Importance of Saying Thank You," June 1991.

Highlighting Careers

To provide the readers with practical information on various careers, PASSAGE interviewed a variety of career professionals throughout Pennsylvania. Each article focused on educational requirements, experience, salary expectations, typical daily activities, personality types, and employment outlook. Articles that highlighted this topic were "What Is Human Resource Management?," October 1990, "Not Just A Secretary," December 1990, "Conference Organizers," December 1990, "Computer-Aided Drafting," February 1991, "Careers That Require Public Speaking Skills," March 1991, "Careers In Psychology," April 1991, and "Would You Like To Be A Teacher?--The Challenges And Rewards," June 1991.

Employment/Educational Services

Throughout Pennsylvania, there are many employment/educational services to assist adults who want to earn their GED diploma, attend college, and enter or re-enter the job market. Unfortunately, many individuals are not aware of the services available to them. During the 1990-1991 program year, PASSAGE received information from many programs/services and highlighted the employment/educational assistance that is available to adult learners. In addition, it was the editors' intent that this information inspire educational/employment programs to improve their services and network with other programs throughout the Commonwealth. Examples of articles that reported this information were "Pennsylvania's Labor Market Analysts," November 1990, "Job Training Partnership Act," December 1990, "Job Trails," December 1990, "Pennsylvania Literacy Corps Teleconference," February 1991, "Need Help Finding A Job? Try The Library!," June 1991, and "The Center On Deafness," June 1991.

Developing Workplace-Communication Skills

Having solid communication skills is becoming an important requirement for employees. Effective personal communication skills can be the difference between being hired or overlooked, being promoted or remaining at the same job, or establishing employment security or getting laid off. With solid communication skills, individuals are more attractive to potential employers. Communication skills apply to any job. The Midland Center, Inc.'s educational and work-related experience and various publications were utilized to develop these articles. Articles that highlighted this topic included "Employment Skills Via Video," October 1990, "Light Writing," November 1990, "Are You A Good Listener?," February 1991, "Active Listening Will Help You In The Workplace," February 1991, "Breaking The Public Speaking Barrier," March 1991, "Developing Writing Habits For College," April 1991, "Daily Writing Habits," April 1991, and "Develop Your E.B.P.," June 1991.

Teamwork In The Classroom/Workplace

Equally important as being self directed on the job, teamwork is a critical component for success in most organizations. PASSAGE emphasized the importance of teamwork in the classroom and in the workplace. Also, PASSAGE stressed to adult instructors how they could use a participative approach in the classroom. Many of the same skills that are used in the classroom relate directly to the work environment. PASSAGE used its staff of experienced adult educators to prepare these articles. Examples of articles that covered this subject were "Participation Can Start In The GED Classroom," November 1990, "Employee Involvement Definitions And Terms," November 1990, and "Workplace Expectations," January 1991.

Higher Education Opportunities

One of the main objectives of PASSAGE is to stress the importance of education and how it relates to being successful in the workplace and being adaptable on the job. In fact, the entire April 1991 issue of PASSAGE focused on attending college. Whenever possible, the newsletter would encourage students to continue their education after they obtained their GED diploma. Education should be a lifelong journey that opens doors and opportunities. Educators and adult students were interviewed, and staff members were used to compile the information. Articles that highlighted this topic included "Internship/Externship Programs," October 1990, "Training - Inquire Within," October 1990, "It's Never Too Late," February 1991, "The College-Bound Adult Learner," April 1991, "The Helping Team," April 1991, "Can You Avoid Computers In College?," April 1991, and "Education Helps Improve Our Earnings And Job Security," April 1991.

Technology In The Workplace

Technology is changing the way companies do business. Computers are an excellent example of a technology that has become a much needed tool in nearly every workplace. Often, individuals do not realize how technology is impacting a career field that interests them. PASSAGE assisted job hopefuls with understanding more about technological changes and how these changes may impact their future careers. PASSAGE utilized its staff which has many years of computer experience. Also, various in-house resources were used. Articles that discussed this subject included "Not Just A Secretary," December 1990, "Computer Aided Drafting," February 1991, "Can You Avoid Computers In College?," April 1991, "Enough Talk About Computers," June 1991, and "Desktop Publishing In The Workplace," June 1991.

Information For Instructors

In several issues of PASSAGE, innovative concepts that tie classroom activities with skills that are used in the workplace were featured. These articles were directed at instructors and tutors. Again, the main objective of the articles was to help students better understand how classroom lessons can be used for success in the workplace. Reflecting on their own experiences, PASSAGE's educational instructors prepared these articles. Examples of articles that highlighted this topic include "Employment Skills Via Video," October 1991, "Do Your Students Know How To Study?," April 1991, and "A Career-Development Tool," May 1991. The May 1991 issue was the Instructors' Special Edition.

Self-Help/Inspirational Articles

Individuals who attend school and/or want to establish successful careers quite often face many obstacles. Understanding this common dilemma, PASSAGE had its staff of professional counselors prepare self-help articles for the side bar section of the newsletter. Inspirational material serves as a motivator for individuals working to better themselves. Articles written on this subject include "Responsible Motivators," September 1990, "Keeping A Promise," December 1990, "Useful Quotes," February 1991, "14,000 Things To Be Happy About," February 1991, "The ABC's Of Childcare," February 1991, "Budgeting Tips," March 1991, and "Important Questions You Need To Ask," April 1991.

Workplace Terms And Definitions

To accompany main articles, PASSAGE prepared several side bars that listed terms and definitions that are commonly used in many career fields. To obtain accurate information, PASSAGE interviewed career professionals, utilized The Midland Center, Inc.'s job developers, and conducted research at local libraries. Articles covering this topic were "Human Resource Terms and Definitions," October 1990, and "Employee-Involvement Definitions and Terms," November 1990.

Labor-Market Surveys/Projections

During the 1990-1991 Program Year, PASSAGE featured articles on labor-market surveys and projections. The articles were designed to give job hopefuls a look into the future and help them prepare (educational and work experiences) for the challenges ahead. The January 1991 issue was a special issue dedicated to labor-market data. It featured a detailed article by Donald R. Laughery, State Labor-Market Analyst, Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. Also, PASSAGE interviewed William J. Ceriani, Regional Labor-Market Analyst, Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. Examples of articles included "Labor-Market Information," November 1990, "Pennsylvania's Work Force In The Year 2000," January 1991, and "Fastest Growing Occupations In Pennsylvania," April 1991.

Success Stories

Periodically, PASSAGE highlighted success stories of individuals and organizations. These articles served as examples and provided possible role models for readers striving to improve their opportunities. To obtain this information, various students and employers were interviewed and publications were reviewed. Articles that highlighted this subject were "Aiming High In Syracuse," November 1990, "Keeping A Promise," December 1990, and "It's Never Too Late," February 1991.

Reader Input

In many issues, the editors requested input from the readers. This information was used to provide a more effective newsletter. Readers were asked to write or call PASSAGE's toll-free number. PASSAGE, with the assistance of several Volunteers In Service To America, conducted telephone interviews from a random sampling of one-hundred (100) readers to evaluate the effectiveness of the newsletter. Examples of articles devoted to reader feedback were "Welcome Back," September 1990, "Network News," October 1990, "About This Issue...," January 1991, and "Results From Our Latest Reader Survey," March 1991.

STUDENTaccesspage

The STUDENTaccesspage was a regular feature in every issue of the PASSAGE newsletter. This innovative insert was specifically designed to be used as a "hands-on", employment/educational skills' tool for the classroom. The information was targeted to students, instructors, volunteer tutors, and program counselors. All inserts were designed by an adult educator. The STUDENTaccesspage had four primary subject areas, and they were Career-Development Tools, On-The-Job Skills, Innovative Classroom Activities, and Job-Search Campaign Exercises.

Career-Development Tools

During the 1990-1991 Program Year, three articles provided hands-on exercises that were created to help adult learners prepare for higher-education opportunities or entering the job market. "Using Your Dictionary And Thesaurus For Career Exploration," September 1990, "Handling Challenges," January 1991, and "Exploring The College Option," April 1991 are examples of articles that focused on this subject.

On-The-Job Skills

Three articles focused on skills that are used by individuals everyday at work. The STUDENTaccesspage often prepared exercises that enabled the adult learner to role-play situations that can occur in the workplace. After the role-playing session, the class and the instructor would discuss the exercise and its relevance. Examples of articles included "Knowing Your Customers," October 1990, "Telephone Etiquette," December 1990, and "Workplace Perceptions," May 1991.

Innovative Classroom Activities

Several issues of PASSAGE featured STUDENTaccesspages that were designed specifically for adult-education instructors. These articles provided instructors with useful classroom techniques for encouraging group participation, incorporating new instructional approaches, and making connections between the classroom and the work environment. Articles that highlighted this subject included "Group Participation," November 1990, and "The Speakers' Bureau," February 1991.

Job-Search Campaign Exercises

Whether it's a lack of experience, organization, or confidence, many individuals are simply not prepared to successfully begin their job-search campaign. Several of PASSAGE's STUDENTaccesspage inserts provided worksheets with detailed examples for preparing many of the tools necessary for securing employment. Examples of articles included "Preparing A Job Application," March 1991, and "Thank-You Letters," June 1991.

Feedback And Evaluation

Knowing what is important to the reader is an essential ingredient for the success of any publication. Placing great importance on reader feedback, articles such as "Welcome Back" and "Network News" invited PASSAGE's readers to write or call (toll free) and give the editors their opinions on the effectiveness and overall reception of the newsletter.

Also, during the months of January and February, The Midland Center, Inc.'s Volunteers In Service To America conducted a telephone survey. A random sampling of over one-hundred instructors, counselors, and program operators from the PASSAGE mailing list were selected and interviewed. Participants were asked to rate the newsletter's content, design, readability, and utility. In addition, individuals surveyed were asked to give examples of how they used PASSAGE in the classroom, provide suggestions for improving the newsletter, and give the newsletter an overall rating (excellent, good, fair, or poor).

The results of The Midland Center, Inc.'s reader-feedback activities were positive and allowed the PASSAGE staff to look at the newsletter from the reader's perspective. Also, many useful suggestions such as featuring more articles on providing job search for special needs' populations, incorporating more photographs, and including up-to-date information on job trends were given by readers.

Here is a brief sample of the responses we received from instructors, counselors, program operators, and students:

"We were recently given a copy of 'PASSAGE' from one of the counselors in the Career Development and Placement Services here at the University. In looking over the issue, we realized that many of the students here at our Center can also benefit from the information you have gathered and published."

J. Kim Bowles
Returning Adult Student Center
Division of Counseling Services and Program Assessment
The Pennsylvania State University

"This article ('Database: A Necessity In The Workplace') explained the use and the functions of a database. It also told me what a database is. It was very clear. Since I am going into the computer field, this is something I want and need to know about."

Rose Smith
Student
SPOC/SAVE Program
Monaca, Pennsylvania

"We have used its tutoring tips and ideas with our tutors and have developed lesson plans from several parts of the newsletter."

Wendy Lindstrom
Executive Director
Perry County Literacy Council

After evaluating the responses from our readers (students, program operators, counselors, and instructors), the editors of the PASSAGE newsletter believe that the newsletter continued to be a useful and needed resource for educational practitioners and adult students. In addition to providing workplace and job-skills information designed specifically for PASSAGE's target audience, PASSAGE complemented existing resources available in Pennsylvania's literacy and adult basic education classrooms and resource centers.

Internal Evaluation

Each month, the editors of the PASSAGE newsletter would evaluate the past issues and discuss any feedback that may have been received in the mail or by telephone. In addition, input was received from The Midland Center, Inc.'s staff who have published works in training and employment and labor-management newsletters and manuals. This monthly review session was a necessary component that helped PASSAGE stay on track throughout the program year.

Every issue of PASSAGE was proofread by no less than three individuals before going to the printer, and all text was analyzed by spell-check and grammar-check programs. Also, all information presented in the newsletter was checked and verified for its accuracy and appropriateness to the target audience.

External Evaluation

An external evaluation of the newsletter was performed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education during an on-site visit by Mr. Dan Partin. The Pennsylvania Department of Education, particularly Mr. Partin, provided useful feedback (contacts and improvements) and support during the entire program year. Also, unsolicited letters and phone calls from program operators across the Commonwealth provided valuable suggestions for the newsletter's usage.

Summary

The PASSAGE newsletter has successfully completed its second year of providing workplace and job-skills information to adult educators and adult students. PASSAGE's informational-exchange network, which includes educators, students, and business professionals, continues to grow. With two years of experience, the PASSAGE staff, through research, training, and feedback, has truly learned to understand and address the special needs of adult learners and adult practitioners.

Distribution of PASSAGE

From September 1990 to June 1991, PASSAGE circulated 2,200 copies each month to educational/employment-related programs across the Commonwealth. Each issue was bulk mailed and sent to the readership seven days before its due date to ensure that all individuals receiving PASSAGE would obtain up-to-date information.

PASSAGE was designed, written (excluding guest-writer contributions), edited, and formatted (camera ready) by the newsletter's staff. Camera-ready copies were then sent to a commercial print shop. (Before selecting a print shop, PASSAGE received three bids from area print shops. The decision was based on cost, turnaround time, and quality.)

Computer software (Ventura Publisher 2.0, WordPerfect, and Right Writer) was used during the writing, editing, and layout/design stages of preparing the newsletter.

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PASSAGE

"YOUR WORKPLACE AND JOB SKILLS INFORMATION NEWSLETTER" SEPT., 1990

Welcome Back

The Midland Center, Inc. welcomes back their readers and supporters of PASSAGE, the 1990-1991 workplace and jobs skills information newsletter. Our editors have been busy reviewing the newsletter's goals and objectives to produce a quality publication filled with useful and motivational subject material.

We are excited about this first issue which covers topics such as self-directed employees, leadership in the workplace, and the dictionary and thesaurus as career development tools. Our approach to writing articles and citing resources will always include an evaluation of the material's utility, sensitivity, and timeliness.

To expand our information network, The Midland Center, Inc. will be contacting and featuring individuals from the Commonwealth who have taken an active role in helping adult learners prepare for today's workplace. PASSAGE's readers include many exemplary teachers, adult learners, program administrators, volunteer tutors, business persons, and vocational counselors who have innovative ideas, concepts, and programs of interest to us.

In summary, The Midland Center, Inc. will strive to make PASSAGE an informative, thought-provoking, and enjoyable publication for Pennsylvania's adult education classrooms. Again, we will solicit reader feedback to improve PASSAGE and to earn the respect of our readers.

The Midland Center, Inc.

New Business Ventures

The Responsibilities Of Leadership

Are you attracted to the idea of starting your own business or planning to work with individuals who are developing a new business? Either career direction will require that you evaluate your leadership skills. The following questions and answers will help you think about the responsibilities of leadership.

Are you willing to try something new? Your decision "to try" is important because leaders are individuals who are capable of taking ideas and developing them into new or improved products and services. Trying something new requires that you make emotional and time commitments to new projects.

Do you have the right attitude? The "right attitude" involves more than your having a pleasant personality. Leaders need to deal with unexpected demands, tough decisions, and project setbacks. How you deal with these problems reflects your willingness to accept the challenging responsibilities of leadership.

Can you share your vision (ideas for success) with others? Leaders know how to share with others their enthusiasm for the business. Leaders do this by explaining how the business will meet the needs of its customers, help the community, and grow with the input of its workers. Sharing your vision with others creates excitement, support, feedback, and opportunities for success.

Will you pay attention to details? Having and communicating your vision are important leadership qualities. However, leaders must also give thought to the day-to-day responsibilities needed to start up a new business and to help it grow. Most often, leaders work with others to complete detailed tasks of the business. They have an overall business plan which serves as a road map to getting the work done well.

(Continued on page 2)

Starting A New Job

Starting a new job can be an exciting time for recently hired employees. However, most new workers are not familiar with the day-to-day routine and unwritten rules at work; therefore, starting a new job can also be a "nerve-wracking" time for them.

Here are a few helpful hints that James Case, Director of the Career Services and Placement Center at the University of Rochester, suggests will help employees adapt and "fit in" at their new place of work:

- Pay close attention to the company's dress code. Observe what your coworkers wear to work and adapt to that style of dress (clothing, shoes, and hair-style).
- Understand that every company has a set of unwritten rules that employees follow. For example, loyalty to your company is a rule that is not always written in the Employee Manual. Loyalty creates a sense of pride at work and promotes success for the company and its employees. Learn to recognize and become familiar with the unwritten rules at your place of work.
- Be aware of the manner in which your fellow employees interact with each other when they work on a specific task. Does the boss expect teamwork and cooperation, or does the boss expect each employee to complete every task individually without any major assistance?
- Learn to understand what "level of involvement" is required by your boss when you are assigned a duty. Not fulfilling all of the responsibilities of a particular assignment or becoming too involved in a project can cause problems in the workplace. In clearer terms, know your freedoms and limitations.

Source: Associated Press, Rochester, N.Y.

(Continued from page 1)

In summary, you can be a leader in the business world if you welcome and understand the responsibilities of leadership. If you think positively, strive for excellence, tolerate failure, value teamwork, and deal fairly with others, you are a potential candidate for a leadership role in a new business venture.

Life's Experiences

"Eliminating Resume Writing Blues"

Are you having a hard time finding items to put on your resume? Do not feel bad; this is a difficult task for a number of people. To help you get started with organizing information for your resume, you may want to review the following resume statements.

The first set of statements was prepared for a woman who wanted to get back into the workforce after many years of staying home to raise her children. As we talked with her, we found that she had been involved in many activities. She did not realize that the skills she had acquired at home and in the community could be useful to an employer. Here are a few examples:

- Organized fundraisers, picnics, and dances for Medical Explorer Scouts; participated in health fairs and patient hospitality programs.
- Scheduled classroom social activities; provided refreshments, games, and prizes throughout the school year for elementary school children.
- Participated in the parent/teacher organization at the local elementary school.
- Maintained an organized household; provided childcare.
- Conducted weekly scout meetings; attended monthly pack meetings; assisted scouts with designing crafts; practiced and demonstrated activities required for earning merit badges; accompanied scouts on field trips to various locations; assisted scouts in cookie sales, deliveries, and money collection

Perhaps you are not in this woman's situation. Maybe you are a young adult who has acquired a different set of skills that you can include on your resume. Below are some statements that might relate to what you have done:

- Delivered daily newspapers; collected money from customers; reported customers' vacation starts and stops.
- Organized personal budget; updated records; balanced check book.

(Continued on page 3)

Swim With The Sharks

PASSAGE Book Review

What do Ted Koppel, Robert Redford, and Dear Abby have in common? They have read and recommended that you read Harvey MacKay's book titled *Swim With The Sharks Without Being Eaten Alive*. Why do they want you to read the book?

One good reason is that Mr. MacKay does an outstanding job sharing his business experiences with others. Even though his work background is in the business field, Mr. Mackay's advice can help you to be successful in whatever career you choose.

In the book, Mr. MacKay uses understandable language, common sense, and humor to help the reader solve problems, care about others, and think positively. He presents real-life events in the business world and discusses people who have winning attitudes in the workplace.

If you want to develop a leadership style, *Swim With The Sharks Without Being Eaten Alive* was written for you. Mr. MacKay discusses leadership qualities such as determination, vision, compassion, and fairness. He offers mini-lessons in how leaders think. These lessons can help you develop your communication skills for the workplace and your daily life.

Swim With The Sharks Without Being Eaten Alive is a special reading treat for individuals who enjoy learning, living, and growing professionally.

(Continued from page 2)

- Supervised children, ages infant through 11.
- Maintained and repaired vehicles; checked and replaced oil, fluids, filters, plugs, and hoses; rotated and changed tires.
- Acted as manager/coach/scorekeeper at organized sporting events.
- Raised $500 by selling magazine subscriptions and washing cars to help charitable organizations.

Preparing your resume does not have to be an intimidating experience. You have many skills and talents. These skills and talents can play an important role in making you employable. Get a pencil and paper, and jot down all the things you have done. You will be pleased with the final results!

For more information on writing and preparing resumes, see the March 1990, issue of PASSAGE.

Workers As Managers

Self-Directed Work Environments

The current workplace can no longer afford the luxury of workers who are waiting to be told what to do and when to do it. Supervisors do not have the time to look over workers' shoulders to make sure that the assigned tasks are being carried out according to the customers' demands. The old idea of having labor bosses is gone; employers do not want to pay supervisors to tell the workers what they should know already. Consequently, today's work world often involves the lowest number of workers doing the most work possible.

How does this workplace trend affect you? Realize that updating and expanding your work skills are critical issues. Improving your work skills shows your employer that you are willing to correct a shortcoming in your job performance. Expanding your work skills shows that you are willing to accept more responsibility on the job. With fewer supervisors in the workplace, employers are looking for employees who will accept responsibility for making the business more efficient.

What can you do to assume more on-the-job responsibilities? Make an effort to learn to be a self-directed worker. You can find ways to show the employer that you are capable of organizing and completing tasks with limited or no supervision. To be self-directed, you may want to offer suggestions for better ways to complete your work. In addition, you may devote time to learning how your responsibilities affect the way your coworkers complete their duties. You can enhance

(Continued on page 4)

Proofreaders' Marks

If your are interested in a career that involves writing (journalism, public relations, radio, and television) or would like to develop your writing skills, then you should take time to become familiar with proofreaders' marks.

Proofreaders' marks are symbols or codes that are used when correcting and editing written material. The marks become an efficient language that is used regularly by writers and editors to save time and space on the written copy that is being proofed.

Here is a list of some proofreaders' marks that may be of help to you when correcting or reviewing written material:

In Margin	In Copy	Meaning
m	autum ^	Insert
tr	the in news	Transpose
sp	for (8) months	Spell out
lc	AUTUMN'S REVERIES	Use lower case
uc	Autumn's Reveries	Use upper case
caps	alice	Use capital letters
#	new ^ shoes	More space
(?)	Mrs. Smith(e)	Is this correct?
⊏	⊏ shoes	Move left
⊐	shoes ⊐	Move right
⊙	autumn ^ Until	Insert period
(:)	as follows ^ shoes	Insert colon

(Continued from page 3)

your opportunities for employment security by practicing ways to be more self-directed.

Employees with diverse skill packages (many on-the-job capabilities) are much more desirable to employers than workers with underdeveloped skill packages (limited capabilities). Less workers who are capable of doing more work produce increased profits for the company. In time, increased profits allow businesses to expand and offer more employment opportunities to the community.

Can you be a worker and manager at the same time? The answer to this question is a definite **yes**. Employers are searching for individuals who will manage all aspects of their work. In addition to your specific job, you may have to oversee the company's inventory, provide customer services, and monitor the quality of the company's product. Today's workers are being asked to assume more management-related roles. With increased responsibilities, the worker-manager type of employee receives more decision-making power and the opportunity for more involvement in the company's operations.

For example, if you had a traditional job as an industrial electrician in the new labor market, you may find yourself managing all phases of equipment repairs. You may have to order parts to repair the equipment, to check the items for defects upon delivery, and to store and protect the parts for future use. Perhaps you would need to operate a computer for inventory control or need to use the computer to electronically locate the problem with the company's equipment. When making the repairs, you would rely upon your experience with electrical codes and customer specifications.

Why is this information important to you? Companies are encouraging employees to take ownership for whatever service or product they are marketing. Self-directed manager-worker types are receiving many opportunities to upgrade and to expand their skills to address new challenges in the workplace. The need for "multi-skilled" workers is strong, and you can prepare for the job market by understanding what companies are looking for in prospective employees.

Interesting Career-Development Resources

"So, You Want To Manage A Business?"

Dictionaries are not only important learning tools for school-age children but also valuable resources for adult learners seeking career-development information. Dictionaries provide insight on general occupations of interest to you.

For example, you may be interested in being a business manager. Begin your career-development research with the

(Continued on page 5)

Exploring helpful career-development resources

(Continued from page 4)

dictionary and look up the word "manager." Continue to explore the definitions for related words such as "manage, manageable, management, and managerial." Interestingly, these words will offer you other opportunities to gain useful career information.

Throughout the definitions of these terms, words such as "control, handle, accomplishing, and directing" will be discovered. Even though you think you know what these words mean, look them up. You might learn something new about them which can be used to understand the variety of responsibilities and skills needed to be an effective manager.

The dictionary, as a career-development resource, may give you examples of who managers are, what and how they manage, and where and when managers are needed in the workplace. Once you have exhausted the dictionary words and their definitions which relate to being a manager, you will be better equipped to use other occupational manuals for more information about specific employment opportunities.

A companion publication that works well with the dictionary is the thesaurus. The thesaurus may repeat information presented in the dictionary; however, it may also enhance your understanding of certain words used in the dictionary by providing you with synonyms that describe your occupational words. The word "manager" is listed in the thesaurus along with the synonyms "executive, administrator, officer, and official." In addition, the thesaurus gives related words such as "handler, impresario, and producer." These additional words give you more ways to look at a career in management.

The thesaurus continues to provide you with "food for thought" about what it means "to manage " by its use of idioms (recognized sayings) that place importance on the role of a manager. The word "manage" is listed in the thesaurus along with the idiom "sink or swim on one's own...." This saying can be interpreted a number of ways and related to the responsibilities of a manager. Adult learners who are interested in personnel, equipment, education, or money management positions might interpret the idiom as follows:

sink or swim on one's own...

- ability to handle employee records (personnel manager)
- skill with computers and other office equipment (equipment manager)
- knowledge of budgets and company finances (fiscal manager)
- willingness to teach others (curriculum manager)

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Marketing Yourself

If you are conducting a job search or starting a new job, not only do you have to be good at what you do, but you also have to know how to market yourself. Let people know what unique skills and talents you possess. Here are some suggestions that will help you market yourself:

- Make yourself the supervisor of your career. Develop short-term and long-term goals. Also, create ways of measuring these goals.
- Treat your boss like an important client. Always be concerned with the boss's needs, and go out of your way to make him or her look good.
- Become a person that is reliable. Volunteer to accept additional assignments that make others' jobs easier.
- Watch your "packaging." In other words, know how to present yourself, and understand what messages you are sending to others. Dress properly and make sure your non-verbal body language projects a successful image.

Source: Radio Only, 1930 East Marlton Pike, Cherry Hill, NJ 08003.

STUDENTaccesspage *Focus: Using your dictionary and thesaurus for career exploration*

Introduction: You can use your dictionary and thesaurus to begin exploring a career of interest to you. These instructional tools offer much more than spellings and definitions for words. They offer you an opportunity to think about the general duties and personal qualities of a worker in the occupation you are considering.

This STUDENTaccesspage will show you how one adult learner used the dictionary and thesaurus to research the teaching profession. You will learn how words, synonyms, antonyms, definitions, and other information were used to form conclusions about the teaching profession.

Career Area: Teaching Profession

Step One "Brainstorming For Career-Related Words"

Career-related words identified by the adult learner were : teach, teacher, instruct, instructor, elementary, secondary, high school, college, education, school, profession, and student.

Step Two "Finding The Words In The Dictionary"

Concentration Words: teach and profession

teach vt. 1. to show or help to learn how to do something 2. to give lessons to a student, pupil, or class 3. to give lessons in a subject 4. to provide with knowledge and insight

* Other information listed for "teaching": 1. usually involves the teacher giving individualized attention to the learner in any subject area. 2. words "instructing, educating, and training" sometimes mean teaching a particular subject or skill area

profession n. 1. a vocation or occupation requiring advanced education and training 2. an occupation involving intellectual skills

Immediately below the word "profession" were other career-related words such as "professional, professionalism, professionalize, and professor". The adult learner discovered how these words relate to each other. Useful information about "professionals" in any occupational field including teaching was learned.

For example, the dictionary stated that "professionals" are most likely paid for what they do, are worthy of high standards, and concerned with quality work.

Step Three "Using The Thesaurus"

Next, the words "teach, teaching, and profession" were located in the adult learner's thesaurus. A number of interesting and related words appeared in print. The adult learner read that the word "teach" means "communicate, impart, instill, enlighten, prepare, and tutor". No antonyms (words having opposite meanings) were listed.

Words such as "calling, craft, and vocation" were listed as synonyms (words having similar meanings) for the word "profession."

Each entry in the thesaurus showed the adult learner that there are numerous ways of describing the "teaching profession" as well as the "teaching professional."

Step Four "Forming Conclusions And Making Recommendations"

The adult learner formed the following conclusions about the teaching profession after reading the dictionary and thesaurus information:

1. To be a teacher means to give individualized attention to the student.

2. A teacher is a professional who is generally paid wages for teaching others.

3. Teachers are not necessarily trainers and trainers are not always educators.

4. "Teaching" involves sharing knowledge and skills.

5. Teachers need advanced education in order to teach others.

6. Teachers need to be good communicators.

The following recommendations were made by the adult learner for further exploration of the teaching career field:

1. More research will be necessary to find out the level of education needed to be a teacher.

2. An interview with a teacher will be scheduled to discuss the day-to-day responsibilities of teaching.

3. More time will needed to explore what the labor market has to say about future teaching opportunities.

4. Aptitude, interest, and academic tests will help me evaluate my career options within the teaching professions.

5. The dictionary and thesaurus will help me learn more about the teaching profession if I look up the other words on my brainstorming list (step one).

Responsible Motivators

We all appreciate words of encouragement when life presents us with difficult challenges. Personal, economic, social, and educational problems confront us throughout life, and we are often comforted by positive comments from individuals who are motivators.

Motivators use statements such as "I believe in you" and "you can do it" to help us explore solutions to our problems. These uplifting statements provide us with a way of thinking positively about ourselves. Their kind words build our self-esteem and confidence.

To further help us, motivators accept additional responsibilities which require commitments beyond those initial words of encouragement. They not only express their "beliefs in us" but also express their willingness to assist us with exploring our options and finding solutions to our problems.

Responsible motivators realize that we may not have the information and skills necessary to tackle our problems. They might offer us instruction in goal setting and effective listening or work right alongside us-- making phone calls to others who can help us solve our problems.

So often, responsible motivators look within themselves for life experiences which are similar to ours and useful to us when we have to make our own decisions. They relate interesting and insightful information which helps us to avoid setbacks and barriers to solving our problems.

Responsible motivators take action steps with us so that we acquire our own problem-solving skills. They are not interested in taking credit for our successes and prefer the self-satisfaction that comes from helping us.

(Continued from page 5)

The thesaurus, with its lists of words, synonyms, antonyms, and idioms, inspires you to think more about your occupational choices. (PASSAGE's STUDENTaccesspage shows how one individual used the dictionary and thesaurus to research the teaching profession.)

Mentoring

Guidance In Decision-Making

One of PASSAGE's writers was inspired by an article in the March 1990 issue of **Black Enterprise** titled "Desperately Seeking Mentors." Recognizing the importance of this subject, PASSAGE would like to take this opportunity to highlight and expand upon some of the information that was presented in the article. If you are interested in a specific academic/vocational field, you might want to consult a mentor.

A mentor, by definition, is "a trusted counselor, tutor, or coach." This person is capable of giving direction or advice to those less versed or experienced in a particular area. A few examples of individuals who could be mentors include, but are not limited to, career professionals, teachers, counselors, and friends.

Oftentimes we choose careers or accept employment opportunities without allowing ourselves the time needed to research information and compare options. A mentor's guidance would serve to lessen anxieties associated with having to make those choices.

Successful career professionals (academic/business) often find it vitally important to contribute towards the development of those who seek assistance in making career/educational decisions. The mentor who has acquired knowledge and experience enjoys helping you explore and evaluate your career plans.

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Consider discussing your career options with a mentor.

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This newsletter was produced internally by TMCI.

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The activity which is the subject of this publication was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.

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What can you do to take that first step toward acquiring your personal mentor? Here is an example to get you started.

If you are interested in going to college for engineering, you might want to follow these steps:

1. Contact your program counselor or an academic advisor at a local college for basic information on engineering.

2. Visit your local library for additional information.

3. Contact an engineer and talk with him/her. Find the type of engineering program that matches your interests.

4. After you have thoroughly discussed the engineering field, make a decision to research the schools offering that particular program.

5. After you have enrolled in school, contact the engineering department for a list of engineers who might agree to serve as your mentor.

6. If you are not satisfied with your mentor's guidance, look for a substitute. Surely there is someone else willing to assist you.

You may have to diligently seek out that special person who will play a vitally important role in the attainment of your goal. Take the time to find a mentor who is sincerely interested in you and your career opportunities.

BCALMC
PASSAGE NEWSLETTER
617 MIDLAND AVENUE
MIDLAND, PA 15059

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PASSAGE
"Your workplace and job skills information newsletter"
September 1990

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PASSAGE

"YOUR WORKPLACE AND JOB SKILLS INFORMATION NEWSLETTER" OCT., 1990

Network News

The PASSAGE staff values its newest partners who have helped us disseminate workplace, job skills, and career-development information. We have experienced the benefits of working with individuals who share our vision of educational and economic development opportunities for all Pennsylvanians.

What's The Buzz editor Dave Fluke became a partner when he welcomed us as members of the Pennsylvania Department of Education's newsletter team. Dave's ongoing support of PASSAGE has helped develop our network of individuals who are interested in PASSAGE's utility and success.

Most recently, we had the pleasure of working with Mary Ann Regan, Dave Ceriani, and Donald Laughery who represent the Department of Labor and Industry in its Pittsburgh and Harrisburg offices. Without hesitation, they offered us assistance with career and employment information which will be featured in upcoming issues of PASSAGE.

In summary, PASSAGE recognizes its many partners who are using the newsletter's information to strengthen and expand their adult education curriculums. They are extremely important partners because they offer us the inspiration and feedback we need to keep PASSAGE on track.

Customer Satisfaction

"Dealing Effectively With Complaints"

Boardroom Reports, August 1990, highlighted the thoughts of Maynard M. Garfield who was quoted saying "customer complaints are opportunities to solidify a business relationship." For some of us, the words "complaints and opportunities" seem incompatible when used within the same sentence. However, Maynard M. Garfield presented these words together in the same sentence to send a message about the importance of good communication skills in the workplace.

Many positions within companies demand that you interact with the customers who purchase your company's products or services. The ways in which you handle complaints can create further on-the-job opportunities for you and can generate additional business for the company.

Rule number one--*You are the company.* Simply stated, these words should send a strong message to you. Customers view you as a representative of the company; therefore, how you respond verbally and nonverbally to complaints is how customers will judge the company's ability to solve their problems.

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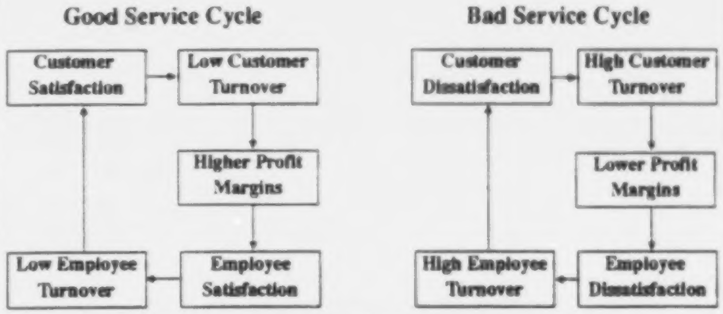
CUSTOMER SERVICE CYCLES



Good Service Cycle

Bad Service Cycle

Adapted from Fortune Magazine, "Breaking The Cycle of Failure In Services," by Leonard A. Schlesinger and James L. Heskett, June 1990.

Internship/Externship Programs

Obtaining employment without practical work experience is a difficult task for many job seekers. Employers are not always willing to hire a job candidate who has no work experience. This can create a "catch 22" situation for the inexperienced job seeker. However, there are ways to work at eliminating this obstacle. One possible solution is to get involved with an internship/externship program. The terms "internship and externship" may be used interchangeably even though they can describe different programs offering the same benefits to the job seeker.

A large percentage of colleges and vocational schools in Pennsylvania offer internship programs to their students. An internship provides a college/vocational school student with an opportunity to gain practical hands-on experience in the work world. Using the knowledge the student (intern) has obtained in the classroom, the intern is placed in an actual work setting and receives academic credit for working as an employee.

In addition to obtaining hands-on experience and academic credit, an internship can build confidence and reinforce the skills that were taught in the classroom. Interns can expand their job search networks which will include supervisors, employees, and clients. In some cases, employers have been known to hire interns who have proven their worth on the job.

Depending on the particular college or vocational school, internships can be full-time or part-time.

Ask your instructor or counselor about colleges or vocational schools that provide internship programs.

(Continued from page 1)

Rule number two--*Never speak for the company when you are actually speaking for yourself.* Understand that what you say is equally as important as how you say it. Most companies have standard procedures for dealing with customer complaints. Be sure to give information that is accurate and approved by the company for the customer. Making unauthorized or personal promises to satisfy a customer's complaint can create many problems for you, the customer, and your company. You do not gain business for your company by making promises which the company can not deliver. When rule number two is violated, you will not only have hurt your company's reputation, but you also may have harmed your employment security.

Rule number three--*Understand the customer.* Not every product or service which your company provides will satisfy every customer's expectations. Unforeseen events can happen which affect the delivery of your company's services. Your company's products can be defective. In other words, understand that the customer may have a complaint which needs the attention of your company. If the customer becomes angry--listen. If the customer is passive--encourage dialogue. Either way, you can clarify the facts which support the complaint. Good listening skills can result in workable solutions to customer complaints and ways to improve the quality of your company's products and/or services.

Rule number four--*Know your company's products and/or services.* You can not handle customer complaints without having general and specific knowledge of your company's business. The customer needs to feel confident about your ability to handle the complaint. Otherwise, the customer, if assertive or aggressive, may ask to speak to your supervisor. On the other hand, nonassertive customers with complaints may drop their complaints and any further business with your company. These situations may be avoided if you have the knowledge and resources to help the customer feel better about doing business with your company.

Rule number five--*The customer is never wrong.* It is unlikely that every customer will have a valid complaint about your company's products and/or services; however, you can concentrate on solving the customers' complaints without elaborating on who is right or wrong in any particular situation. Concentrate on your eagerness to solve the customer's problem versus your intent to take blame away from the company. Avoid using words which personally attack the customers. Remember that a win-win situation for the company and the

(Continued on page 3)

Classroom Video Projects

If you have access to a video camera and viewing equipment, the following classroom projects will help adult learners relax and have fun while acquiring important employment skills.

On camera...

1. interviews about student interests (e.g., talking about hobbies, career goals, and educational plans).
2. commercials about any product or service (e.g., promoting education, recruiting adult learners, or even selling alka-seltzer).
3. coverage of local news stories, upcoming events, and general announcements (e.g., GED graduation ceremonies, college career days, or free blood-pressure screenings).
4. storytelling assignments using books or personal subject material (e.g., reading or relating fictional and nonfictional stories).
5. performances of dramatic or comedic material (e.g., plays and skits).

Be creative. Design your own classroom video projects, learn new skills, and have fun!

(Continued from page 2)

customer is often possible when you focus on a problem's solution rather than on who is to blame for the problem.

Rule number six--*Rule numbers one, two, three, four, and five work together to help you acquire excellent communication skills.*

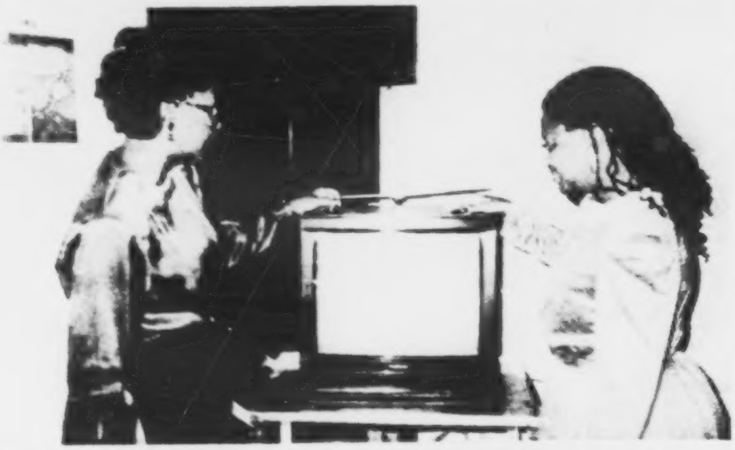
Your ability to communicate in a clear, confident, and knowledgeable manner is of great value to the company. Employers like to hire employees who can provide customer satisfaction by dealing effectively with complaints directed at the company. Your excellent communication skills will be recognized and hopefully rewarded whenever those skills result in increased business for the company.

Lights--Camera--Action

Employment Skills via Video

Many adult students have been introduced to the wonders of video technology. They watch educational and home entertainment programs which offer them ways to learn and relax. However, a majority of them have not had opportunities to acquire employment skills via video classroom activities. Employment skills such as public speaking and teamwork can be explored through nonthreatening exercises behind, and in front of, the video camera.

Instructors can encourage students to learn more about their skills, interests, and abilities by providing them with access to a video camera, recording equipment, and a viewing monitor. If presented with filming activities that are fun and indirectly related to important workplace responsibilities, adult learners have the potential to be innovative producers, directors, writers, technical assistants, and performers.



For example, adult education instructors can help their students prepare for speaking in front of groups at work. There are a number of classroom video taping assignments which can be fun and productive tools for learning how to handle public speaking opportunities in the workplace (see accompanying side bar for suggested activities). Adults who are initially uncomfortable speaking in public often turn into stars whenever they have a chance

(Continued on page 4)

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Cold Calling Employers

What is **cold calling**? Cold calling refers to the practice of contacting employers on the telephone or in person for the purpose of obtaining employment or employment related information. The person you are calling does not know who you are, was not expecting your call, and may or may not be recruiting job applicants at the time of your call or visit.

If you are well prepared and persistent, cold calling can help you get an interview. Here are some tips about cold calling that you can use in your job search:

- Call early in the day when people are fresh and more receptive to calls. Potential employers are less likely to be busy at this time. Do not call at lunch or at the end of the work day. Employers may not take the time to write down your name, refer your call, or talk openly when they are on their way out the door.
- Be polite. Using good manners and killing them with kindness (to a certain extreme) can get you positive results. Be friendly and show your appreciation of their time and assistance.
- Know what you are going to say. Rehearse your script. When you call, you will most likely speak to the receptionist or secretary. Ask him/her if you can forward your resume to the person involved in hiring new employees at the company, and ask for this person's name and title. Never telephone and ask "Are you hiring?" If you are cold calling in person, dress neatly, conservatively, and professionally. The first impression is the most important.

The November issue of PASSAGE will feature part two of "Cold Calling Employers."

(Continued from page 3)

to work behind the scenes or in front of the camera preparing a short program for their peers.

Adult learners with reserved or outgoing personalities will benefit from on-camera exposure. Instructors can encourage reserved individuals to develop their presentation skills through nonthreatening exercises such as reading a prepared script while being filmed. More confident students can speak extemporaneously on a variety of topics including their favorite television show or hobby.

The technical aspects of operating a camera, setting up a scene for filming, and preparing a script for taping are activities which instructors can schedule to reinforce other employability skills needed by adult learners. Doing math, writing and reading scripts, following stage directions, thinking creatively, and working cooperatively are fundamental skills appropriate for the classroom and workplace.

Periodically, adult education instructors can break away from traditional lecture methods to promote workplace literacy skills through the creative use of video technology. This departure from the standard academic curriculum will be instructional and fun; and who knows--a future Jane Pauley, Bryant Gumbel, or Connie Chung may be sitting in the classroom thinking about a career in news broadcasting.

Job Security vs. Employment Security

What Is The Difference?

In the traditional workplace, there was a feeling among workers that their jobs were safe as long as they took care not to take too many coffee breaks. There was an unwritten law of doing things the way they were done in the past. This belief was not true, and it fostered the mistaken notion of job security. There never was job security. No employer could ever promise a worker a job for life. People believed the myth of job security because there were many mills and factories that offered jobs to persons willing to work.

This all changed when these manufacturing sites had to reduce their work forces. Manufacturers had to keep their costs in line to stay in business. Keeping costs down meant reducing the work force and requiring the remaining workers to do more than they did before the cutback. Today, the most important contribution a worker can make to his/her employer is flexibility. When one worker can do many tasks, the employer

(Continued on page 5)

"Training - Inquire Within"

Are you aware of the amount of free training that is yours for the taking? To find information about free training, all you really need to do is pick up a newspaper, journal, magazine, or trade periodical.

Start reading the business sections of these publications and look for headings such as: Calendar of Events, Workshops, Datebook, Business Events, or Open House.

Not all workshops are free. Seminar sponsors will sometimes charge minimal registration fees. However, the benefits of attending low or no-cost seminars and workshops are many. By becoming an active participant, you can:

- enhance your knowledge in a variety of subjects.
- acquire specific information about a field or topic that motivates and interests you.
- increase your job-search network of friends and business associates.
- upgrade or learn new job-related skills.
- develop a greater sense of community involvement.

Organizations that frequently sponsor workshops are: hospitals, realty and manufacturing associations, professional business associations, YMCAs, non-profit organizations, and financial institutions. Topics range from changing and selecting the right career to staying physically fit.

Point of caution: when you register, ask who is conducting the sessions. Sometimes, businesses sponsor these workshops to persuade the audience to buy their products or services.

By asking the right questions, you can discover many training opportunities.

(Continued from page 4)

can function with fewer people on the payroll. Production remains the same, customers receive their goods or services, and the employer saves money when flexible or cross-trained workers are used.

Employment security sounds like it is the same as job security, but it is not. Employment security is offered to workers who have many skills and the capability of training other workers in these skill areas. Their jobs may be different from what they did before, and their jobs may change tomorrow. However, they can always provide service to an employer. Remaining employed in periods of hardship is the reward to employees who have the insight to gain new skills.

An example of this type of flexible worker would be a millwright (industrial mechanic) who earns an associate degree in some field of engineering technology. Now, this employee has the capability to not only fix mechanical systems but to also assist the engineers in designing or changing operations in the workplace. The company saves money whenever this employee can help prevent costly repairs to equipment and train other apprentices in new maintenance technologies.

In summary, an employee's ability to make many contributions is important to today's employers. Employees should work hard to remain an asset to their companies by learning new skills and by applying their knowledge in the workplace. This practice will help them obtain employment security with growth opportunity.

Researching Careers

What Is Human Resource Management?

Researching careers can make students want to pull their hair out. Job titles and descriptions often leave students more confused than when they started investigating career fields of interest to them. Instructors can help ease this problem by using the following example which assists students with understanding careers in human resource management.

Step One - Ask students to brainstorm answers to questions such as:

- What would you think a Human Resource Manager does?
- Do you know of anyone who works in a Human Resource or Personnel Department?
- What skills and education do you think are important for this type of job?

(Continued on page 7)

Focus: Knowing Your Customers

Introduction: In the business world there are many managers who feel that it is very important for employees to know their customers. What does "knowing the customer" mean? According to Harvey MacKay, an author and company owner, knowing your customer means gathering information about the customer's interests, goals, education, work history, and lifestyle. Even information such as the customer's birth date is important to companies that send birthday cards to their customers.

You can use the same techniques which perceptive managers and sales personnel use to build relationships with their customers. Imagine yourself as the "product" you are selling. Think about the people you meet day-to-day as the "customers" who might be interested in you. You can easily build relationships with others who will enrich your life and expand your career opportunities. Your riches can be counted in terms of new friendships, business networks, and future references.

Directions: Identify someone you are interested in knowing. This individual can be a new neighbor, coworker, fellow student, or instructor. Find the time to start a conversation with this individual. Keep in mind that you should be genuinely interested in this individual and will use the conversational information you gather to build a sincere relationship with him/her. The following topics can be reviewed by you before beginning this exercise which teaches the importance of building relationships with others. Some of the topics will be easy to discuss while other topics may require more time talking with the individual.

Information-Gathering Topics

Name
Age
Home town
Children
Education History
Work History
Special Interests
Leisure Activities
Hobbies
Vehicle
Television
Goals
Likes and Dislikes

Discussion:

What types of questions can you use to gather the information? Give examples of open-ended questions (What do you think of the Pittsburgh Pirates?) and closed-ended questions (Did I hear you say that your name is Bernadette?).

How can you avoid asking questions that will be interpreted as "nosey or offensive?" Give examples of good and bad ways to ask questions.

Will you always find the information you gather interesting and compatible with your own personality, goals, and likes and dislikes? Talk about how you might handle information which conflicts with your own interests, goals, likes and dislikes.

What will your conversational tone sound like?

How will you use your listening skills?

Human Resource Terms and Definitions

Benies - Abbreviation for benefits. The types of benefits that companies offer employees (e.g., health, life, dental and eye care insurance, pensions, profit-sharing, vacation, sick leave, maternity/paternity leave, etc.).

Compensation Specialist - The individual responsible for controlling costs associated with wages, bonuses, health, and related benefits.

Contract Specialist - An individual who helps to write, revise, interpret, and administer contracts the employer has with unions, the government, and outside organizations.

EEO Administrator (Equal Employment Opportunity) - An HR person ensures that employers do not discriminate against individuals, regardless of their age, religion, color, national origin, race, or sex in regards to pay, benefits, hiring promotions, discharge, and other aspects of employment. Employers who have contracts with the federal government must also ensure fairness to handicapped individuals and special veteran groups.

H.R. Manager - A Human Resource Manager must ensure that all workers in an organization are being most effectively used. This is done by creating and carrying out policies which are fair, just, reasonable, and communicated to the workforce in a timely manner.

Selection - The methods used to screen people for jobs in order to make suitable matches between company needs and employee skills and abilities. HR Managers use aptitude/personality/achievement tests, personal or telephone interviews, reference checking, application/resume data, and other devices in selecting the right person for the job.

(Continued from page 5)

Step Two - After informally brainstorming the answers to the questions, distribute the following article. Have students read the article and provide them with additional time for their questions. These steps can be repeated when researching and discussing any career field that may interest your students.

Sample: Human Resource Management Careers

Are you a "people person?" Are you interested in any of the following: managing finances; reading about legal issues and applying them to the workplace; training and motivating workers; organizing events and seminars; writing and negotiating contracts; recruiting and selecting employees; or evaluating workers' performance (to name just a few)?

If you can answer yes to most of the questions, you may want to consider carving a career for yourself in the field of Human Resource Management. In the past, many workers only dealt with the personnel officers for hiring purposes. Once hired, employees primarily asked personnel officers for assistance with insurance, hospitalization, and related benefit information.

The shift from "Personnel" to the more trendy and complex "Human Resource Management" term has created more than just a change in vocabulary. Today, the role of Human Resource Managers reflects a broader view of these "people-oriented" professionals. The HR person (see side bar) must learn the technical as well as the humanistic aspects of the business.

In today's society, HR professionals must have the ability to read, write, and speak in technical terms. Because of the variety of legal issues that arise in the workplace, these academic tools are essential for survival in this field.

For example, companies that receive money from the federal government must prove they do not discriminate in their hiring, promoting, or firing practices. The HR Manager must be able to comprehend the government's often wordy and complicated contracts. HR workers in unionized settings would undoubtedly agree that interpreting labor contracts can be an even more difficult task.

Most often, larger corporations employ individuals within the Human Resource Department who have specialized in specific areas (e.g., Recruiters, Compensation and Contract Specialists, Labor/Employee Relations Managers, and Employee Assistance Coordinators).

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For HR staff who work for smaller companies, a wider variety of skills and experience can be gained because of fewer people staffing the organization. Regardless of the company's size, if HR personnel expect to be successful at their jobs, they must have basic knowledge in all of the areas mentioned above.

Instructors - *Adult learners who are interested in a human resource career can get on the right track by brushing up their reading, speaking, writing, and math skills. By landing an internship or an entry-level position in a human resource department (for practically any business), they can start to learn the nuts and bolts of the trade, and this will help them decide if this "people-career" suits them.*

The activity which is the subject of this publication was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.

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PASSAGE NEWSLETTER
617 MIDLAND AVENUE
MIDLAND, PA 15059

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PASSAGE

"Your workplace and job skills information newsletter"

October 1990

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PASSAGE

"YOUR WORKPLACE AND JOB SKILLS INFORMATION NEWSLETTER" NOV., 1990

Reoccurring Themes

The PASSAGE newsletter is written to eliminate some of the problems adult learners encounter as they explore ways to improve their educational and employment outlooks. Therefore, the publication is dedicated to the curriculum planning needs of educators and counselors who are seeking subject material for their adult education classrooms.

As our readers scan the many topics presented in the newsletter series, we hope they recognize some important reoccurring themes. For example, we want to continually stress the importance of good communication skills as they relate to worker responsibilities. Throughout other articles, we will repeat the need for cooperative learning experiences which expose adult students to group participation and problem-solving activities. At other times, we will reintroduce strategies for choosing a career or securing employment.

Reoccurring themes will appear in PASSAGE because we feel they are important to the newsletter's focus and success. We hope that our most recognized theme will be an understanding of, and a caring attitude about, our readers.

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Today's Workplace

Participation Can Start in the GED Classroom

Achieving a common goal requires each member of a group to make contributions. The end product or final outcome reflects the total efforts of each team member. This is true of every task in life that requires more than one person to work towards a successful conclusion. Sports, cooperative business, and obtaining a GED are all examples.

Business needs participative employees. To remain competitive in national and international markets, workers must understand how to better contribute towards the success of their companies. Improvements in management style, workplace safety, work rules, and productivity start from someone making suggestions. The employee who contributes becomes a valued asset to the employer.

Participative actions or cooperative work environments have not been a major part of American management practices until recently. Most employees are not accustomed to making suggestions or contributions that can affect the decisions made at their places of work. Recognizing that opportunities for employee involvement are already starting to take place, a participative attitude must be developed and nurtured. The GED class setting is a good place to develop this attitude because a large number of adult learners are seeking employment opportunities through the GED process.

Instructors

- Encourage your students to participate in the process (cooperation and problem solving). Often the most difficult part of doing a new task is gaining the confidence to get started. Participation in the GED process is a rewarding experience for everyone involved. See the STUDENTaccesspage for sample exercises.
- Establish ground rules to keep participation active. Team members should understand that group participation is a total learning experience, and everyone must respect the feelings of others. Encourage input from all participants so that problems may be resolved; every team member should be able to accept the group's solutions to problems.

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Employee Involvement Definitions and Terms

More private and public-sector businesses are trying to encourage their employees to participate in employee involvement and workplace problem-solving teams. Understanding some of the more common terms and their acronyms (words formed from the initial letters of words in a phrase, i.e., FYI--For Your Information) used in employee involvement efforts may help you at your job or in an interview. *Here are some examples:*

Employee Involvement (EI) - People working together (participation) in the workplace to increase productivity, efficiency, and pride. These programs can be as basic as suggestion boxes or as complex as independent work groups that solve workplace issues. Employees are asked to participate in the decision-making process.

Employee Involvement Teams (EIT) - Groups of employees (both management and hourly) that work on job-related problems such as reducing waste, improving safety, and creating better working conditions.

Quality Control (QC) - The process of keeping the quality of the product or service at the highest level possible.

Total Quality Management (TQM) - All employees are expected to give their ideas and to join teams to provide solutions to quality problems. This type of management is present when a business is committed to continuous improvement in their operations.

Statistical Process Control (SPC) - A method (mathematical) of gathering data (facts) and charting the information to establish a range (parameter) that is acceptable to maintain the quality of the product or service.

Self-Managing Work Teams (SMWT) - Groups of employees that manage themselves and their own work within a department or unit.

Continuous Improvement (CI) - The belief that there is always room for more efficient work methods.

(Continued from page 1)

- Practice active listening with your students. Discuss their responses or reactions to the materials being presented. Have them pay close attention to what is being said; participants need to know how to listen and understand each other.

- Give your students time to grasp the importance of participation. Remember, this may be a relatively new process of learning; therefore, some students may find group participation activities uncomfortable until they experience the benefits of offering their ideas and opinions in a group process.

Group problem solving is an example of a cooperative process that builds participation skills. Students learn how to present solutions to problems in a logical manner. If a group has difficulty understanding a problem and finding its solution, the problem can be restated using a different approach. When alternative approaches fail, the instructor can show the group how to solve the problem.

This cooperative process helps students gain experience in group problem solving. They begin to feel capable of presenting their ideas in a meaningful way. The end product of participation is overshadowed by their newly-acquired skills of analytical thinking and public speaking.

Upon receiving their GED diplomas and further skills training, the students can make productive business better by keeping the participative process active and healthy in America. This possibility alone should create an interest in using cooperative learning processes in the GED classroom.

Computer Applications

Database: A Necessity in the Workplace

Have you ever picked up a newspaper "want ads" section and read about job openings for database clerks, database managers, or computer application specialists? Few people have a good understanding of what these individuals do for a living and how database programs have become a necessary part of the highly-computerized business world. If you are interested in the computer field, understanding how to operate a database program can increase your opportunities for employment.

A database is an organized collection or storage place of facts and information. Today, most companies store information (accounts, personnel records, lists of customers, mailing lists, etc.) on a computer using database software. The computer operator who uses a database program has quick access to records and can create lists or analyze existing information.

Before this computer technology was developed, records were typed or handwritten on paper and stored in filing cabinets. There were many disadvantages to using this type of system.

(Continued on page 3)

Cold Calling Employers (Part II)

The October 1990 issue of PASSAGE featured the first part of an article on cold calling. If you are persistent, this practice of contacting employers on the telephone or in person for the purpose of obtaining employment consideration or employment-related information can be effective.

Here are more tips on cold calling that can help you with your job search campaign:

- **Evaluate your approach, timing, consistency, and image.** Know yourself and be confident in your abilities.
- **Condense your script.** When cold calling, do not try to tell the receptionist or employer everything about yourself. Highlight a few of your qualifications. Understand that they are busy and may have a limited time to talk.
- **Show initiative.** If an employer is interested in looking at your resume and cover letter, offer to deliver them in person. However, do not be overly aggressive. The employer may be too busy to meet with you; therefore, leave your information with the employer's receptionist, or send it by mail. Remember, your main objective at this time is to have the employer look at your resume.
- **Do not get discouraged.** If an employer is not interested in reviewing your resume, close the conversation in a polite and friendly manner. Be sure to thank the employer for his/her time.
- **Be prepared** when the company's receptionist or secretary suggests that you try again at a later date. Find out the best time to call back and the name of the person you are to contact. If an employer cannot help you, ask for a referral. Maybe he/she knows another employer who can provide assistance to you.

(Continued from page 2)

For example, storing the information took up a great deal of space, and finding records was often time consuming. Also, very few people used the same system for filing information. If the employee in charge of record keeping was not in the office, coworkers often had a difficult time retrieving company information because they did not understand the filing system.

With a database software program, employees in charge of maintaining records can store the information in the computer or on a disk. Little office space is needed, and all database software is designed for fast retrieval of information. Once records are stored in the computer database program, the information can be altered or reformatted at any time to suit the particular needs of the company. The worry of having to learn more than one filing system is eliminated. Everyone follows the same guidelines for recording, retrieving, editing, and reformatting information.

The PASSAGE mailing list is a good example of how a database is a useful and valuable tool in the workplace. PASSAGE uses a database program to store the names, titles, and addresses of individuals who receive the monthly newsletter. The advantages of using a database program for the PASSAGE mailing list include: the ability to print our 2,200 mailing list labels in less than an hour (using a computer and a printer); the luxury of organizing the list by zip code for quick and efficient bulk mailing (a database can also be organized in alphabetical, numerical, or chronological order); and the flexibility of being able to add or delete information in a matter of minutes.

Employers expect database operators to have received some type of computer training (college, vocational school, or a private training school). In addition to having a knowledge of computers and database programs, the database operator should have solid typing, reading, and math skills.

If you are interested in learning more about database programs and a career in this area, a wealth of information is available at your local library or bookstore. Also, you can contact local computer centers or colleges that offer database classes.

Database programs offer organization and efficiency.

Pennsylvania's Labor Market Analysts

If you are interested in obtaining specific labor-market information for your area, here is a list of contact persons:

Edward Murray, *Counties Served* - Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Philadelphia Counties in PA; Burlington, Camden, and Gloucester Counties in NJ, (215) 560-1977.

Kenneth Shockley, *Counties Served* - Carbon, Lehigh, Northampton, Pike, Wayne, Schuylkill, Berks Counties in PA; Warren County, (215) 378-4314.

James J. Mowad, *Counties Served* - Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Wyoming, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Bradford, Tioga, (717) 963-3443.

Fred Scheider and Larry Baugher, *Counties Served* - Cumberland, Dauphin, Lebanon, Perry, Lancaster, Adams, York, Franklin, Fulton, (717) 771-1272.

Glenn Lynn, *Counties Served* - Centre, Lycoming, Potter, Juniata, Mifflin, Clinton, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, Union, (717) 327-3504.

William Findley and Debra Nicholson, *Counties Served* - Blair, Cambria, Somerset, Bedford, Clearfield, Jefferson, Huntingdon, Elk, Cameron, (814) 533-2213.

William Ceriani and Roberta Wilson, *Counties Served* - Beaver, Allegheny, Fayette, Washington, Westmoreland, Butler, Indiana, Armstrong, Lawrence, Greene, (412) 565-5350.

Carol Patterson, *Counties Served* - Erie, Mercer, McKean, Clarion, Crawford, Forest, Venango, Warren, (814) 871-4298.

Research and Statistics

Labor-Market Information

How would you find information on the percentage of individuals who are unemployed or employed in your area or across Pennsylvania?

What jobs or careers are in demand now, and what will the employment outlook be like in the year 2000? Who can benefit from knowing this information?

PASSAGE spoke to Mr. William J. Ceriani, regional labor market analyst for the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. Mr. Ceriani works in the department's Bureau of Research and Statistics' Pittsburgh office. The following interview with Mr. Ceriani uncovered many interesting facts about his work and the satisfaction he receives from helping others find answers to the aforementioned questions.

PASSAGE: Mr. Ceriani, will you tell us about your on-the-job responsibilities?

Mr. Ceriani: I am responsible for compiling, analyzing, and disseminating labor-market information for a specific geographical area of Pennsylvania. I work full-time with regional data from nine (9) counties. There are a total of eleven analysts working in eight regional offices throughout Pennsylvania (see accompanying sidebar). Individuals should contact their regional office for specific labor market information of interest to them.

PASSAGE: What kind of data do you gather, analyze, and report?

Mr. Ceriani: I work on a number of labor-market information projects. However, the monthly determination of employment and unemployment rates for the region is the most recognized project. A complex method is used to prepare the information. This method relies upon data collected from a survey of some of the area's employers. Interestingly, this method of data collection is used in all fifty states.

Other examples of reports include affirmative-action information and wage data for individuals employed in the south western Pennsylvania region. Currently, our office is working on the largest wage survey ever attempted because it will report the average wages and starting wages for one hundred thirty-five (135) occupations.

PASSAGE: How are the reports you prepare used, and who commonly requests this information?

Mr. Ceriani: The Department of Labor and Industry's information is used by a wide audience for a number of purposes.

(Continued on page 5)

Research Specialists

If you would like to explore some recognized or uncommon careers that involve research skills, the following information may spark your interest:

- Researchers in the field of social welfare use research methods that provide others with an understanding of social problems affecting individuals within our society. They construct surveys and other tests that collect data about social problems. This data is evaluated and used to design programs that help eliminate today's social problems (i.e., public assistance programs).
- Educational researchers direct and coordinate the use of instructional materials in public school systems. They work with various committees and advisory groups to obtain information about the educational needs of students and teachers (i.e., a list of procedures and time tables is written for introducing more science and math courses in a school district).
- Research associates for museums plan, organize, and conduct studies of scientific, cultural, historical, or artistic information. This information is used to develop projects of interest to the public. Sometimes the results of their studies are published in technical journals or are used to build displays for museum audiences (i.e., a display of dinosaurs is built after researching how dinosaurs appeared when they roamed the earth).
- Nuclear-decontamination researchers identify the problems of decontaminating radioactive equipment and work areas. They test machinery to determine the type and cause of radioactive contamination. Most importantly, they prepare reports that show companies and their employees how to deal with radioactive materials (i.e, guidelines for removing toxic waste materials and storing them).

(Continued from page 4)

Educators, by studying labor-market information, are often able to design curriculums that will be used to prepare workers for existing or future jobs. Economic-development organizations can review labor-market reports for information that will help with planning or attracting new businesses. In addition, nonprofit organizations can use local unemployment figures and other labor-market information to support their need for public and private sector grants which can provide social and/or educational services to the disadvantaged. These grants are often awarded to organizations that have documentation taken from labor-market reports. These are a few of the ways labor-market information can be used by individuals and organizations.

PASSAGE: It appears that you have to use many basic skills in order to do your work. Please comment.

Mr. Ceriani: There are many skills needed to do the work effectively. Math, reading, and writing skills are used every day to prepare the reports. In addition, good oral communication skills are necessary because labor market analysts work with, and speak to, many different groups of individuals.

PASSAGE: Are you saying that your job involves a great deal of public contact work? Somehow, we might have pictured a labor-market analyst working behind the scenes with numbers, charts, and graphs.

Mr. Ceriani: Surely, much of my time is spent doing self-directed work at a desk or computer terminal; however, I speak to community planning groups, students of all ages, and many service organizations such as the United Way. I also serve on committees in an advisory role.

PASSAGE: You speak with enthusiasm about your work and have expressed deep satisfaction with your career choice. What would you say to an adult learner who may be interested in a career as a labor-market analyst?

Mr. Ceriani: You need a certain mind-set to work with statistics and research projects. This includes giving attention to detail, working with technical information, and meeting strict deadlines. Although job openings for new labor-market analysts have decreased throughout Pennsylvania, adult learners can explore occupations that offer similar working conditions and require many of the same skills (see Research Specialists on this page).

PASSAGE: Thank you for sharing this information with our readers.

Focus: Group Participation

Introduction: You can acquire important skills which will help you participate in group discussions and problem-solving exercises. These skills can be learned in your GED classroom as you prepare to pass the high school equivalency tests. You can build your group participation skills while you study the different subjects that are presented in your GED classes.

For example, you can learn math, writing skills, and English grammar rules through the process of group participation. To see how this can be done, you must first agree to take part in the following exercises. They were developed to help you understand how group participation activities are used to solve problems, encourage creative thinking, and learn new information.

Generally, participation activities work best when someone serves as the leader of the group. You can pick your leader by voting or drawing a name. Whatever approach you use to choose a leader, remember that this person will be responsible for helping the entire group learn from the exercises. Therefore, you may want to decide how your group leader will best serve the needs of the group. Set some ground rules. For example, only one person will speak at a time, and everyone will listen carefully as each person speaks.

Exercise One: Group Participation Math

After selecting a group of 3 to 5 individuals, the instructor will distribute a paper on which a difficult word problem is written. Everyone in the group should read the problem and identify the mathematical operation(s) needed to solve the problem (i.e., I will need to add, multiply, and divide the numbers before reaching the solution). This may take a few minutes, and the group participants should have an opportunity to write down their math steps along with a final answer to the problem.

Next, the group leader will open the discussion with the following questions:

1. Did everyone identify the same problem-solving steps for this word problem? Did some individuals have different methods? If so, why? Did everyone have the same method? If so, could the problem have been solved using a different method not identified by the group?

2. What key words in the problem statement helped the group members identify the mathematical steps needed to solve the problem? Does everyone agree on the same key words? Why or why not?

3. What is the correct answer to the problem? Does everyone in the group agree with this answer? Why or why not?

This process should be repeated for other math problems that the teacher and group members feel are difficult to solve. When the group begins to take less time to find solutions to these problems, the process is most likely working. The students will have experienced the importance of working together and learning from each other.

Exercise Two: Group Participation Essay Writing

The teacher will present a sample essay topic to the group (i.e., How can parents encourage their children to stay in school?). The group leader will guide the discussion by presenting the following questions to the group:

1. What was the first thought that came to your mind on this topic?

2. Did anyone encourage you to stay in school?

3. What arguments do children present in favor of dropping out of school?

4. How and what can we tell our children to encourage them to stay in school?

5. How can we present our ideas and information in a logical manner that deals directly with the essay topic?

The group should prepare an outline for the essay topic. Each member should agree to write an essay following the group's outline. When the group convenes for discussion, the leader can ask each member to read his/her completed essay. A discussion should follow the essay readings to a) reveal how the group members felt about the quality of their own essays and b) to give constructive criticism about the essays their fellow group members wrote.

This creative way of approaching essay writing helps inexperienced writers learn from class members who may enjoy the writing process. The group can experience ways to help each other, and this cooperative learning process will build everyone's confidence and skills.

Light Writing

PASSAGE has always emphasized the importance of solid writing skills in today's workplace. Being confident in your ability to prepare effective written communications will increase your importance to a potential employer. However, what can you do if you are reluctant a writer?

There is a process that may help you overcome your reluctance to write. It is called the Three Color Process (the colors of a traffic light). This process consists of three phases that overlap each other. The three phases are:

- **Green** - This is your creative phase. At this time, you should record on paper whatever ideas enter your mind. This phase consists of planning and drafting (creating a rough outline or organizing related information). Do not be critical of your work during this phase (grammar, spelling, punctuation, content). Be imaginative; you can correct your mistakes later. At the green light, the writer moves forward without hesitation. Do not enter the next stage until you have completed the creative phase.
- **Yellow** - This is your clarifying phase. It consists of drafting and revising; it is similar to a rehearsal. Yellow indicates that the writer should be cautious. During this phase you should start to put the pieces of your assignment together. You should have a main topic, supporting ideas, and examples. In this phase, your article will take shape and have a definite direction. Be selective, but do not be overly critical. When you finish this phase, you will have an organized rough draft.
- **Red** - This is your correcting phase. You should revise and edit during this stage. Now is the time to check for errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, content, etc. Be highly critical. When you complete this phase, you will have a focused and polished product.

Be careful! Do not function in more than one phase at a time; combining phases makes the writing process more difficult than it has to be.

Adapted from: *"The Write Way To Write," James L. Evers, Training and Development Journal, September 1990.*

Retraining Workers

Aiming High In Syracuse

"Every day when employees walk into work, they see the connection between education and employment security," states Mark Sembrat, a peer counselor at the United Auto Workers(UAW)-Chrysler Motors' Region 9 Training Center in Syracuse, New York. In August of 1990, the PASSAGE staff was visited by representatives of the UAW-Chrysler's Training Center. They openly discussed the distinctive features of their training center and the importance of today's and tomorrow's employees upgrading their skills on a regular basis. Their center serves as an excellent example of how companies and unions can cooperatively build training programs that assist existing workers and job seekers alike.

As explained to us, UAW-Chrysler's program strives to better match workers' skills to jobs, to improve the workforce's overall academic abilities, and to treat workplace literacy and education as a family concern. An agreement between Chrysler Motors and the UWA, in addition to a Department of Education grant, provides the funding for the center's educational and dislocated worker programs.

The mix of people eligible to take advantage of the center's free programs includes employed and unemployed Chrysler workers and employees from neighboring companies. Basic skills training (Reading and Writing Improvement, Math for Machinists, Algebra, Geometry, and GED) is available at the center. Also, other courses offered include Residential Wiring, Basic Drafting, Blueprint Reading, Computer-Aided Drafting, Financial Planning, Real Estate, and more. At this time, two of the most popular courses at the training center are Brian Tracy's "Psychology of Achievement" and Dale Carnegie's "Leadership Training."

The concept of "family-centered" training is an important part of the center's mission. "Our goal is to continue toward making it a complete family education center in which any

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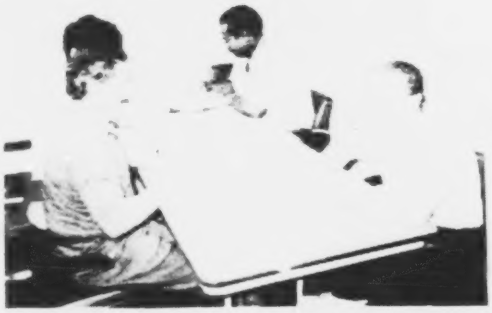

Workers upgrading their skills at the UAW-Chrysler Training Center

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member of the family can participate in programs designed to enrich his/her life," explained Tom McLaughlin, one of two co-administrators for the center. Training such as CPR, babysitting clinics, and even basketball are offered.

Although providing these types of training programs is not an easy task, the potential benefits for employers and their employees far outweigh the costs. Innovative companies can combine efforts to find resources needed to offer literacy and other self-improvement programs. Neil Falcone, also a co-administrator at the center, comments, "With the unprecedented rate of change occurring in the workplace and the emerging need for more highly-trained workers, companies may not have a choice in offering workplace literacy programs."

Great progress can be made if workers and job seekers refuse to wait for a bad situation to occur before they become serious about upgrading their skills. Workers must see the relevance of continued education if they expect to keep up with the pace of the work world. Employers and employees need to be motivated and agree to work together. As far as the co-administrators are concerned, "Only then will we collectively hurdle the variety of complicated technological and economical obstacles that face us in the 1990s."

BCALMC
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PASSAGE

"Your workplace and job skills information newsletter"

November 1990

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PASSAGE

'YOUR WORKPLACE AND JOB SKILLS INFORMATION NEWSLETTER' DEC., 1990

Learning Partnerships

Using Questions?

When you are in the classroom, the instructor is the person you depend on to teach you what you need to learn. The instructor comes to class prepared to teach; therefore, you should be attentive and actively listening to what material is being taught.

If you do not understand the material that is being taught and feel frustrated, do not hesitate to ask questions. Instructors welcome questions because questions help them to know how much of the material is being understood by their students.

Your questions can lead to a discussion of the material by your classmates and you. These discussions can be beneficial to everyone, including the instructor. Questions and discussions can correct any misconceptions the instructor and students have about the material.

When instructors and students work together, the atmosphere becomes more conducive to learning, and the classes are more interesting. Enthusiasm for learning builds, and you can almost feel the excitement of learning.

The instructor's responsibility is to teach. Your responsibility is to learn. When you take advantage of the opportunity to ask questions, teaching and learning become welcomed responsibilities. Your questions will not only help you to learn, but they will also help build a learning partnership.

Employment Opportunities

Job Training Partnership Act

In Pennsylvania, approximately 2.1 million individuals are considered economically disadvantaged and are eligible to receive job training services from the Job Training Partnership Act (J.T.P.A.). The main mission of programs and activities provided under the Job Training Partnership Act is to help people get jobs. The J.T.P.A. program assists economically disadvantaged youths and adults and dislocated workers.

The Job Training Act enables the greatest number of individuals in need of training assistance to obtain permanent full-time employment. Assisting unemployed individuals in obtaining jobs through basic and occupational skills training, retraining, counseling, job search, direct job placement, and other forms of assistance is the goal of the program. In fact, new federal laws are permitting more individuals to qualify for J.T.P.A. services throughout the State.

Another goal of the program is to offer incentives that encourage employers to take advantage of the State's trained work force. For example, an employer can receive monies from J.T.P.A. funds to partially support a J.T.P.A. candidate's wage while working for the company. Some individuals may qualify for this J.T.P.A. on-the-job training incentive program.

J.T.P.A. offices are located across the country and typically offer the following services: occupational skills training, job counseling, basic educational skills, support services, and job placement. J.T.P.A. provides services to:

- **At Risk Youth** - Individuals, age 14-21, who belong to one or more of the following categories: (1) Expectant or parenting youth; (2) Youth offenders; (3) Actual or potential school dropouts; (4) Drug and alcohol abusers; (5) Students who are two or more years behind their age group in the number of credits attained or in basic skill levels.

(Continued on page 2)

Job Trails

Without preparation, starting a new career can be a difficult process. To help individuals become familiar with the many basic skills needed in the workplace, the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy at Penn State (Main Campus) has developed Job Trails.

Job Trails is a computer program that helps adult learners (4th to 8th grade levels) acquire basic skills that are commonly used on the job. The program focuses on reading, writing, and math skills that are used everyday in the workplace.

Different from an interest-assessment inventory or a career-direction program, Job Trails is designed for adults who are thinking about a career and want to obtain more information about an occupation. The career fields that the program addresses are:

- Health care
- Retail trade
- Administrative support (clerical)
- Food service
- Maintenance

This program was specifically designed for individuals who are not familiar or comfortable with working at a computer. In other words, Job Trails is extremely user-friendly.

Job Trails will be available, July 1991, at many area libraries, employment agencies, and adult education centers throughout the Commonwealth. For more information, contact Eunice N. Askov, Director, or Bernice Sheaffer, Literacy Specialist, at the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, 204 Calder Way, Suite 209, University Park, PA 16801, (814) 863-3777, FAX: (814) 863-6108.

Job Trails is funded by grants from the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Commerce. This project is coordinated with job search and resume writing software developed by PHEAA for the State Library by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

(Continued from page 1)

- **Public Assistance Recipients** - Individuals and family members who receive cash benefits and food stamps or are defined as transitionally needy, general assistance recipients. (Transitionally needy recipients are individuals who are eligible for cash welfare assistance for 90 days out of a 12-month period.)

- **Dislocated Workers** - Individuals who have lost their jobs because of mass layoffs or plant closures are the third group targeted by J.T.P.A. This group also includes those individuals who have lost jobs with small firms. *Note:* If you are working for a business, regardless of its size, and it permanently or temporarily closes, you may be eligible for J.T.P.A. training services.

Individuals interested in J.T.P.A. sponsored and funded training should call their local Job Training Partnership Act Agency, their local Private Industry Council, or their local Office of Employment Security for more information.

Highlighting Careers

"Not Just a Secretary!"

When clients would ask Marsha to describe her job, she would mockingly reply, "I am just a secretary!" Although conveyed more in jest than sarcasm, her message was that there is more to the secretarial profession than most people realize.

At first glance, most individuals visualize secretaries answering telephones, greeting customers, scheduling travel arrangements, filing, typing reports, and handling the books. However, it is when you peek behind the scenes that you gain an accurate picture and a true appreciation of a secretary's worth to a company. To get a closer look at the demands placed on secretaries in today's job market, several secretaries in the Pittsburgh area were interviewed.

Marlene Betancourt, Lynn Vagush, and Kelly Mussey (all Mobay Corporation or contract secretaries) each work for as many as twenty engineers in the company's Robinson Township facility. These six-year veterans discussed the skills needed to be a secretary and the technological advancements which have become a part of today's office environment.

Skills included in their list are: speaking; writing (including spelling and grammar); typing (manual typewriter and word processor); shorthand (in some organizations); organizing work; prioritizing assignments; filing; learning tasks quickly; deciphering other's handwriting; and perhaps most importantly, possessing a double dose of patience and flexibility.

(Continued on page 3)

Preparation and Practice

If you are about to graduate and are planning to enter or re-enter the job market, knowing how to handle yourself in an interview is essential to gaining employment. Two key ingredients that are needed to have a successful interview are preparation and practice.

Before you schedule an interview, you must have an attractive resume and cover letter. However, you should understand that a good resume and cover letter can only lead to acquiring a job interview. How successful and convincing you are in the interview will most likely determine whether or not you will get the job.

When preparing for the interview, think about the questions that may be asked at the interview (October 1989 and November 1989 issues of PASSAGE) and how you might answer the questions. Also, research the companies that you are targeting in your job search by obtaining information from the library or by talking to their employees.

Remember to be on time for the interview. If possible, arrive at the interview a little early. Punctuality is important to employers.

Another important factor is appearance. Dress for the interview, not the job. Be neat and conservative. Men should wear suits, and dresses or suits are the best choices for women.

Finally, do not get discouraged if you are having difficulty landing a job. Think of each interview as a good practice for the next one that comes your way. With preparation and practice, you will secure employment.

Adapted from the article: "How to Handle That Crucial Job Interview," Randolph E. Schmid, Associate Press Writer, Washington.

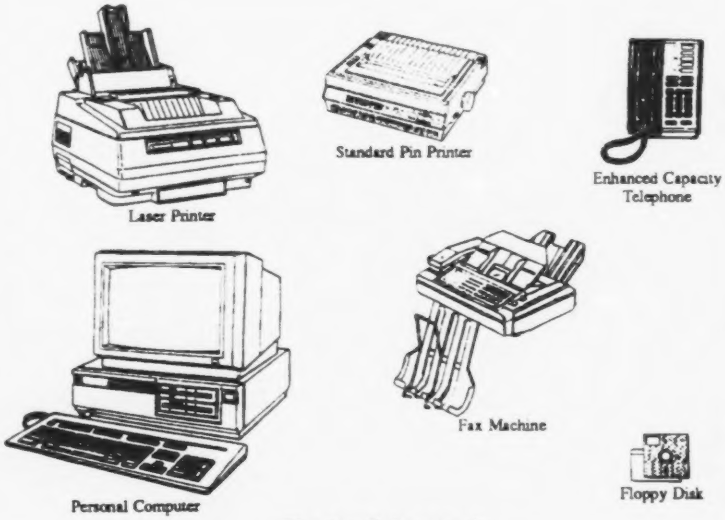
(Continued from page 2)

Many of these secretarial skills are commonly used to greet customers and the public; answer, record, and transfer calls in a courteous and professional manner; type/edit business letters; locate and retrieve information quickly and efficiently; schedule and arrange a calendar of events and appointments; and update filing systems.

At work, Marlene, Lynn, and Kelly have been introduced to today's sophisticated office technologies. For example, they all have computer skills, know how to operate laser printers and fax machines, and work with disoss electronic mail and enhanced-capacity telephone systems.

Offices equipped with these advanced communication tools can exchange business documents and messages by way of computers and fax machines. In addition, personal computers can be used to prepare company newsletters, customer brochures, and customized reports, letters, and contracts. Secretaries who operate computers and other advanced office equipment help their companies sell products and services more efficiently. At Mobay, secretaries receive transmissions from Germany on a daily basis using their electronic mail system.

Marlene, Lynn, and Kelly want PASSAGE's readers to take the "just" out of the response "I am just a secretary." They believe secretaries should build their self-worth and have the respect of their coworkers and supervisors. After all, secretaries have always had to adapt to dramatic changes in the workplace while maintaining a professional attitude and appearance. Their knowledge and efficiency positively affect the company's image and productivity.



Tools of the trade

How to Leave Your Messages

When using voice mail or another answering device, be careful about the way you leave a message.

Don't be guilty of the "Hurry up and get it over with" personality. For example: "Hithisispatfastfromxyzcorporationpleasecallmeat5145556764."

Chances are the person receiving the message will have to replay it three or four times. You may never get called back. Instead, try this:

"Hi, this is John Doe from the XYZ Corporation. Please call me at 514-555-6764, that's 514-555-6764."

People receiving this message will thank you for it. If you have difficultly speaking slowly, at least say your phone number slowly, then repeat it, slowly. (Pretend somebody at the other end is writing it down as you speak.)

Source: Lewis G. Scott, 1004 Driftwood Crescent, Orleans, ON K1C 2P1, Canada.

The activity which is the subject of this publication was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.

Effective Communication

Proper Telephone Manner

Whether you are preparing to contact potential employers or are providing assistance to customers at your new job, you should become familiar with the importance of proper telephone manner. How you are perceived by others while talking on the telephone can impact how successful you are in your job search and in your career.

Suggestions for your job search

If you are calling a company about a job opening, the tone of your voice and your attitude can affect how much help and information you will receive from the secretary or receptionist. Here is a sample of a telephone conversation that was **not** conducted in a proper manner:

Receptionist: Good morning, Woodlawn Construction.

Joe: Hey, are you hiring?

Receptionist: No, not at the present time.

Joe: My friend said you were hiring; let me talk to your boss.

Receptionist: I'm sorry, but he isn't in the office right now.

Joe: You're no help, bye.

What was your impression of Joe? He wasn't at all friendly or polite. Because of his attitude, he received no information about the job from the secretary. He does not know if they are accepting applications to keep on file for future openings. Also, he failed to obtain the name of the individual in charge of personnel. What Joe did not realize was the person who answered the phone could have been the owner or boss.

Now, let's give Joe a second chance. In this example, Joe uses proper telephone techniques, and he is much more successful in his attempt to gain employment information.

Receptionist: Good morning, Woodlawn Construction.

Joe: Good morning! May I speak to your personnel manager?

Receptionist: I'm sorry, Mr. Jones is not in the office today.

Joe: Well, maybe you can help me. My name is Joe Burns, and I would like to apply for a position at Woodlawn Construction.

Receptionist: We're not hiring at the present time; however, I can mail you an application that we will keep on file for six months.

(Continued on page 5)

Famous People

Keeping a Promise

Twenty-seven years ago former second baseman Joe Morgan was offered a professional baseball contract. His mother said she would prefer he get a college education instead of playing baseball. Joe, however, was determined to start his baseball career with dreams of reaching the major leagues. At the time, he made a promise to his mother that he would some day earn his degree from college.

Joe became one of the best players in the big leagues (e.g., Houston Astros and the Cincinnati Reds). His determination, hard work, and intelligence earned him two most valuable player awards and a spot in the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Today, Joe Morgan is a successful businessman who owns a chain of fast food restaurants. He also is a sports announcer on ESPN, a popular television network which features sports' events.

His many personal and financial successes did not cloud Joe's memory of the promise he made to his mother. On June 16, 1990, forty-six year old Joe Morgan was dressed in a cap and gown as one of 2,565 graduates receiving degrees from California State University-Hayward, California. His proud mother and father were in attendance at the outdoor ceremony.

As quoted in the **Sporting News**, Joe said, *"You're always sorry if you don't get your degree and never sorry if you do."*

- Jim Dolmovich, Sports Consultant, TMCI

(Continued from page 4)

Joe: That would be great. My address is 209 North Central Road, Newtown, PA 19999. When would be a good time to deliver my application to Mr. Jones?

Receptionist: I would suggest Tuesday or Wednesday morning.

Joe: Would you mind if I called you on Tuesday to make sure Mr. Jones will be available?

Receptionist: That would be fine.

Joe: Thanks for your time and help, good-bye.

This time Joe received information that may help him secure employment in the future. Using proper telephone manners made a difference, and he will be remembered by the receptionist as being courteous and pleasant.

Suggestions for on the job

If you are answering the phone at your place of work, remember that you represent your company. You are responsible for satisfying the customer and conveying the proper image of your company. Customers will remember and appreciate an individual who is friendly and helpful.

Here are some tips to follow when using the telephone at work:

- Be polite and friendly.
- Smile when you talk. (You would be surprised how this can positively affect your tone of voice.)
- Be ready to take or leave a message (name, complete phone number, time the call was made, etc.).
- Identify yourself when you make a call, and briefly explain why you are calling.
- Have your questions prepared ahead of time when you are seeking information.
- Get to the point; do not waste time.
- Present a positive image.

The next time you are using the telephone to call a potential employer or to assist a customer at your new job, be sure to practice proper telephone manner.

If you are interested in a career which will involve using the telephone, see this month's STUDENTaccesspage for an interesting discussion on telephone etiquette.

STUDENTaccesspage

Focus: Telephone Etiquette

INTRODUCTION: Perhaps you are seeking a career which will involve using the telephone to communicate with customers and coworkers. The following is a list of situations and practices which employees who are responsible for communicating over the telephone may encounter. To prepare for these responsibilities, you can complete the following discussion exercise.

DIRECTIONS: Your task is to read through the statements and discuss why or why not they describe acceptable telephone behavior for the workplace. Discuss your feelings about these "telephone etiquette statements" with your teacher and/or classmates. Be careful of certain words (e.g., seldom, usually, never, etc.) which may affect how you will respond to the statements. Give examples to clarify your feelings about these situations and practices.

Telephone Situations And Practices

Sometimes, you have no choice but to respond impolitely to customers who treat you rudely when they call your company.

Most employees can feel comfortable with giving an employment reference for a former employee who is no longer working for the company.

In some situations, it is proper for you to address a frequent caller to your organization by his/her first name.

Always ask unfamiliar callers to spell their names and related information (i.e., their companies' names) so you can deliver an accurate message to the proper individual at your company.

You should politely ask callers "to hold the line" while you take other calls which may be more important or urgent.

You can always make a limited number of personal calls from the workplace to family or friends.

After building a close relationship with your supervisor, you can speak to callers for him or her whenever there are questions about your company's business.

When taking a phone message, you should ask the caller to repeat his/her telephone number instead of you having to repeat it to the caller for accuracy.

As a telephone receptionist, you should always have a plan for handling emergency calls either to or from your company.

Most callers appreciate "small talk", and you can feel free to initiate conversations about the weather, children, or sports.

Never accept calls from individuals who will not give you their names yet request to speak to employees of your company.

If your supervisor is not available to receive a call, always tell the caller why he/she can not take the call.

It is always an excellent idea to use a telephone message book that records duplicate copies of phone messages placed to your company.

If you suspect a caller is upset with your company's product and/or service, it is always your responsibility to help solve his/her problem.

Conference Planning

When planning a conference, workshop, or seminar, you may wish to consult the following checklist of questions:

- Is the topic/subject interesting, timely, and/or appropriate for the intended audience?
- Have I researched the topic/subject to find general and specific information that will help support the presentation?
- What resource persons can contribute to the presentation of the topic/subject?
- How will I present in writing or conversation the content of the topic/subject?
- When, how, and where will the topic/subject be presented?
- Did I develop a method and/or tool for the audience to evaluate the presentation?
- What can I list as the expected results/outcomes of the presentation?

Correction

In the October 1990 issue of PASSAGE (side bar, page 1), Mr. William Ceriani's name was mistakenly printed as Dave Ceriani. Mr. William Ceriani is a regional labor market analyst for the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. We extend a sincere apology to Mr. Ceriani.

A Not-So-Common Career Field

Conference Organizers

If you like to do research, plan events, and work with people, then you may be interested in a career as a conference organizer. Many companies employ individuals part-time or full-time to arrange conferences on topics of special interest to the public.

For example, there are many conferences being offered throughout the nation that deal with topics such as workplace literacy, patenting, and starting a business. These topics are popular right now because people are interested in learning more about them. Conference organizers bring together resource persons and materials that can satisfy the public's need for more information.

To assure that a conference will be successful, skilled conference organizers must do their research. They know how important it is to have a working knowledge of the topic. This often means reading articles about the topic, talking to experts in the field, and designing a brochure that will encourage individuals to attend the conference.

Donna Portnoy, Vice President of the Institute for International Research, knows all about conference planning. She spends much of her time investigating conference topics that can be interesting and valuable to the public. She finds her work challenging and satisfying.

Donna told us how she must use her communication skills to do her work effectively. Her ability to talk with people seems to guarantee that she will find the right speakers for the conferences she schedules. Donna uses her network of friends, fellow employees, conference attendants, and resource materials to secure the names of possible speakers.

After contacting the speaker(s), Donna relies upon her writing skills to summarize the topics, times, and dates for upcoming conferences. She carefully reviews her research information

(Continued on last page)

PASSAGE thanks Donna M. Portnoy (right), Vice President, Institute for International Research, Inc., 437 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-7001 for contributing to this article.

(Continued from page 7)

to produce a marketing brochure. Brochures often change in style, content, color, and design to best represent each seminar's subject matter and audience. For example, Donna explains that she learned how certain colors relate to a topic better than others and how those colors might be used to prepare brochures for particular groups of people.

"Everything comes together for the conference through teamwork," states Donna. She emphasizes the importance of working with her fellow employees at the Institute throughout the various stages of conference planning. Donna explained how different departments have specific responsibilities yet welcome opportunities to work together. "Even when I have finished my responsibilities with a project, I enjoy following the project until it is completed," reports Donna (see side bar on page seven for PASSAGE's conference planning stages).

Conference planning can offer you an opportunity to meet interesting people, further your education, and market your skills. If you would enjoy a career that demands good communication and planning skills, conference organizing may be an ideal choice.

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PASSAGE

"YOUR WORKPLACE AND JOB SKILLS INFORMATION NEWSLETTER" JAN., 1991

About This Issue...

Happy New Year, and welcome to the January 1991 issue of PASSAGE. This issue is a slight departure from past editions of the newsletter. In this month's issue, we are focusing on information and projections that deal with educating and training today's work force for the 1990s and the year 2000.

With the valuable assistance of State Labor Market Analyst Donald R. Laughery, this special edition provides adult learners, workers, educators, and business leaders with suggestions and insight on how to better prepare for tomorrow's workplace.

The main goal of this issue is to stress the importance of education, training, retraining, and the ability to adapt to change. These key factors will enable individuals and organizations to be successful in the job market.

We hope you enjoy this issue and welcome your input on the workplace and job-skills information that is presented in each issue of PASSAGE.

PASSAGE Editors

The activity which is the subject of this publication was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.

Special Feature

Pennsylvania's Work Force In The Year 2000

By Donald R. Laughery
State Labor Market Analyst,
PA Department of Labor and Industry

Depending on how it's done, predicting the future can be risky business. Who, for instance, would have guessed last winter that problems in the Middle East would flair up just when plans were under way for a major scaledown of the military?

So it goes with labor-market projections. Fortunately, much about Pennsylvania's labor force in the year 2000 has already been determined, since today's elementary students will be high school graduates of the year 2000. The total labor force that will begin the 21st century has been born, and two-thirds of it is already working.

Based on trends in Pennsylvania over the last few years and taking into account certain factors observed on the national level, labor-market analysts in the Bureau of Research and Statistics, Department of Labor and Industry, have made projections on what the state's labor market will look like at the end of the 20th century.

> **"As Pennsylvania moves forward in its diversification into new industries, most notably "high tech" and service, the presence of a skilled and educated labor force and a strong business development environment is critical."**

Some of those trends are described in a special report, **Labor-Market Trends Through the Year 2000 -- Pennsylvania Profile.** These projections not only provide a "road map" of

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Older Workers

Adapting To Change

Undoubtedly, there are older workers who do not like to change the way they do their work. However, there are also younger workers who are equally disturbed by changes in the workplace that affect how they complete their on-the-job responsibilities.

Rather than dwell on the subject of age and its influence on a worker's ability to adapt to change, let us take the position that everyone can deal effectively with training and education programs which are introduced properly in the workplace. *Here are some questions that organizations can ask themselves before implementing a workplace-training program.*

- Have the current academic and technical-skill levels of the employees been assessed should they lack any prerequisite skills that will affect their success in the new training program?
- Is the length of the planned training program consistent with the time needed to master or sufficiently attain the new skills?
- Will the training have immediate application to the employee's day-to-day workplace responsibilities?
- Do the facilitators of the training program have a plan for handling individual differences in the ways employees learn and apply new skills?
- Are employees, whenever possible, participating in the selection, design, implementation, and/or evaluation of these training programs?
- Would creative partnerships between older and younger workers contribute toward the success of these training and education programs?
- Can follow-up services be offered to employees who have completed the training and education programs and still need further assistance?

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what probably lies ahead, but suggest a series of challenges and opportunities for government, business, and labor leaders.

Below are some of the findings and challenges discussed in the report:

1. Pennsylvania's Population Will Become Older, While Growing Modestly.
It is projected that there will be 12,081,000 Pennsylvanians in 2000, an increase of 1.8 percent from 1980. At the same time, the state's population like that of the nation, will age as the so-called baby-boomers (those born between 1946 and 1961) move into middle age.

Meanwhile, people are having fewer babies. With the number of youth available for work projected to decline, youth unemployment should likewise decline and competition for entry level jobs will decrease.

The challenge: As the average age of the work force rises, far fewer freshly trained youth will be available for new technical occupations, and there will be an increased need to attract and train older workers. Companies that must pay special attention to the decline in available youths will be those that traditionally have grown by adding large numbers of flexible, lower-paid young workers to their staffs.

Additionally, as technology advances with a rapidly changing economy, an older, more stable labor force could face problems adapting. Companies with an older work force may find that these higher paid workers make them less competitive. Retraining older workers and dislocated workers in new technologies will be critical to success.

2. More women will enter the work force.
The already obvious trend of more women in the labor force will continue through the year 2000. The female participation rate is expected to climb from 53 percent in 1989 to 60.5 percent in 2000. Looked at another way, over three million working women will represent 48 percent of Pennsylvania's labor force, up from less than 45 percent in 1989.

The challenge: The implication of more women entering Pennsylvania's work place will be significant. More females will want both jobs and children. Conflicting priorities covering pay, fringe

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STUDENTaccesspage

A PASSAGE Editorial

Pennsylvania's work force faces many challenges as the year 2000 quickly approaches. Existing and future workers will have the responsibility of facing those challenges with renewed excitement, discovery, and success.

Adult learners, namely the unemployed, underemployed, special-needs populations, and minorities, can be a part of the solution to tomorrow's demand for academically - and technically - prepared workers. Within our adult-education classrooms are individuals who are willing to work and to learn new skills that will benefit Pennsylvania's employers and the State's ability to thrive economically.

Our adult learners can make suggestions which affect how we as educators plan their programs of academic and vocational education. They can offer us ideas for reaching, enrolling, and retraining other adult learners. They can explain why our current methods of instruction need improvement. They can also tell us when we are doing a good job of educating and training them.

This month's STUDENTaccesspage is devoted to the belief that adult learners have much to contribute to the career development process of others like themselves. The following exercises will help us learn from their experiences, try their ideas, and most likely improve the quality of our programs and services.

In summary, PASSAGE salutes its adult learners as they enter the New Year with enthusiasm and determination. We commend them for their patience and hard work.

Sincerely,

The PASSAGE Newsletter Staff

Focus: Handling Challenges

Exercise One: Public Service Announcements - How to Reach and Recruit Adult Learners

Cut from the daily newspaper several examples of public service announcements made by area organizations that are recruiting members for their programs. Distribute these announcements and discuss their similarities and/or differences.

Discuss what information has been included for the reader. Talk about the writers' styles, and ask your students what they like or don't like about the public service announcements.

Next, have your students work alone or in teams to write a public service announcement for your adult education program. Stress how they might link the importance of an education to opportunities for employment security and success on the job. Explain what limitations the newspapers may present to them (e.g., number of words, position in the newspaper, time of printing, etc.).

Encourage your students to be creative. Perhaps they have word choices and phrases which can add to the likelihood that other adult learners would respond positively to the announcement.

Note: *If your students develop an idea that is not appropriate for the newspaper but offers tremendous promise, you can encourage them to adapt the idea for posters, bookmarks, and other public presentations.*

Tips for Writing Public Service Announcements

- **Include who, what, when, where, why, and how.**
- **Be concise and to the point.**
- **Give name and phone number for contact people.**
- **Give date for release.**

Exercise Two: Women in the Workplace Manual

Form a consortium of adult learners who happen to be women with school-age children. Have them establish the following:

A mission statement for their organization that includes the group's intention to assist women who may face emotional and financial hardships when initially entering the workplace.

An agenda for no less than six meetings which will offer other working mothers one to three hours of programming per meeting on subjects of interest and importance to them (i.e., dealing with day care).

Ask the group to record the information gathered during these meetings for later use in what can be titled "Women in the Workplace Manual." However, we suggest that you encourage the consortium members to title their own publication as they feel would best describe the contents of the manual.

Offer them a listing of divisions or chapters that can include, but not be limited to, the following topics:

I. Success Stories

A. Women Who Have Overcome Anxiety and Hardship On Their Way To A Successful Career

B. Creative Ways of Parenting

II. Financial Strategies

A. Tips for Saving and Stretching Money

B. Cooperative Child Care Arrangements

III. Employers Who Value Working Moms

A. Flexible Hours for Working Parents

B. Maternity Leave Rules of Most Companies

Have the consortium members guide the direction of the manual by including those subjects which they feel are important to other working women. Ask them to do research to discover what agencies and programs are available to single parents, dual-income families, special interest groups (physically/emotionally handicapped), and minorities.

Next, assist them with the final layout and design of the manual. Make copies of the finished publication for distribution to new program members who can benefit from the information gathered by the consortium.

Exercise Three: Career Motivation Maze

Locate PASSAGE's words of motivation by circling them within the maze of letters printed below. After all words have been located, ask participants to use each word in a sentence which describes their goals and aspirations.

Word List

CAREER
ACHIEVEMENT
SATISFACTION
INCOME
EMPLOYMENT
JOB
EDUCATION
SKILLS
TRAINING
GOAL
KNOWLEDGE
BENEFITS
MONEY
COLLEGE

A	W	S	A	T	I	S	F	A	C	T	I	O	N
C	A	R	E	E	R	A	C	E	F	G	N	Y	Y
H	C	T	U	V	W	A	X	Y	M	Z	G	A	E
I	E	G	I	J	M	O	I	Q	R	O	A	E	N
E	D	U	C	A	T	I	O	N	A	C	C	N	O
V	N	O	W	C	Y	S	T	L	I	V	E	N	M
E	U	E	M	P	L	O	Y	M	E	N	T	T	I
M	N	O	W	L	X	C	O	L	L	E	G	E	C
E	A	C	I	N	O	K	J	C	B	A	Q	R	V
N	C	K	N	O	W	L	E	D	G	E	B	O	J
T	S	T	I	F	E	N	E	B	C	B	A	L	A

Today And Tomorrow

Workplace Expectations

What can you tell adult learners about the ever-changing workplace? First, you can tell them that some aspects of work will never change. *For example, employers will always expect workers to be...*

- interested in and loyal to the company.
- capable of working alone and with teams of employees.
- advocates of quality production and on-the-job safety.
- committed to ongoing learning and self-improvement.
- giving the company 100% of their skills, knowledge, and time while on the job.

These most desirable characteristics of employees help employers build successful businesses. Neither technology nor time will ever change the demand for employees who fit the aforementioned descriptions.

What is changing in the workplace? There is evidence that today's employees are more likely to...

- change their job descriptions more rapidly during their employment history.
- use their thinking skills versus their manual skills.
- work with highly sophisticated machinery and equipment.
- engage themselves in programs of higher education with an emphasis on basic and technical literacy skills.
- contribute to the way companies do business.

Employers and employees will be creating workplaces that are equipped to handle rapid changes. These changes will occur as companies strive to satisfy their customers' demands for better products and services. Competition among today's companies is steadily increasing. Therefore, tomorrow's workplace must be prepared for continuous challenges and higher employee expectations.

(Continued from page 2)

benefits, time off, pensions, welfare, and other issues must be revised to allow for job sharing, flexible work hours, and employer-sponsored child care.

3. More minorities will be needed in, and must be attracted to, the work force.

Pennsylvania's unemployment rate is expected to remain near current levels -- about 5.0 -- in the year 2000. While relatively low numbers of Pennsylvania residents will be unemployed, problems will remain among certain population groups similar to those we currently experience. Blacks and Hispanics, over-represented in low-skill, high-turnover occupations, could continue to face high joblessness.

During 1989, the estimated jobless rate for Blacks statewide was 9.0 percent, double the rate for all persons. Based strictly on past employment performance and without taking into account a shrinking labor pool, minorities will continue to experience near double-digit unemployment in the year 2000.

The challenge: The projected high joblessness of minorities probably will be affected by employers who, faced with a shrinking labor pool from which to draw, reach out further to provide jobs to historically disadvantaged groups. This will entail a determined effort -- by government and business -- to effectively prepare the disadvantaged for participation in the labor force through education, training, and retraining.

4. Pennsylvania's businesses will be smaller and more reliant on advanced technology and a well-educated work force.

Observing Pennsylvania's industrial outlook finds a forward-moving economy, one where ingenuity is coupled with research and development. Companies will tend to be smaller, and a better-educated labor force will be needed. As heavy industry is overhauled, industrial robots will boost productivity, handling many of the more repetitious and dangerous functions. The advent of such technology will lead to the creation of support jobs in programming, installation, repair, and operation of machinery. Education and training needs will be of major concern.

5. The number of service occupations will grow; manufacturing will decrease.

While advanced-technology occupations are among the fastest growing in Pennsylvania, these jobs will account for a relatively small portion of future job growth. Occupations with the greatest number of job openings statewide will be the traditional jobs of cashier, sales clerk, security guard, secretary, registered nurse, and nurse's aide. During the 1990s, many of

(Continued on last page)

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This newsletter was produced internally by The Midland Center, Inc., 617 Midland Avenue, Midland, PA 15059.

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these traditional occupations will evolve to the point where workers will use state-of-the-art technology on the job. As such tools become more complex, the labor force must be trained and retrained.

As Pennsylvania moves forward in its diversification into new industries, most notably "high tech" and service, the presence of a skilled and educated labor force and a strong business development environment is critical. Now is the time to invest in education and training and to ensure the full participation of women and minorities in the labor force. These investments will be needed to secure the existence of a qualified-work force in the years following 2000.

By addressing training and retraining issues -- along with providing for the needs of working families with children, bringing minority workers into the work force, and creating a more flexible work force -- Pennsylvania can help make full use of all talents of its labor force and make a successful transition into the next century.

Copies of "Labor Market Trends Through The Year 2000 - Pennsylvania Profile," as well as other statistical publications, may be obtained free of charge by contacting the Department's Bureau of Research and Statistics at (717) 787-6466.

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PASSAGE

"Your workplace and job skills information newsletter"

January 1991

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PASSAGE

"YOUR WORKPLACE AND JOB SKILLS INFORMATION NEWSLETTER" FEB., 1991

Are You A Good Listener?

Effective listening skills can make you more efficient and productive--and can hasten your climb up the career ladder. Here's a short quiz to determine how effective a listener you are.

Rate yourself on each of the following listening characteristics using this scale: Always--4, Usually--3, Rarely--2, Never--1.

1. Do I allow the speaker to express his or her complete thoughts without interrupting?
2. Do I listen "between the lines," especially when conversing with people who use hidden meanings?
3. Do I actively try to develop retention ability for important factors?
4. In recording a message, do I concentrate on getting down the major facts and key phrases?
5. Do I repeat essential details of an interview to the speaker--to ensure correct understanding?
6. Do I avoid becoming hostile or excited when a speaker's views differ from mine?
7. Do I tune out distractions when listening?
8. Do I make an effort to show interest in the other person's conversation?

Scoring:

26 or more: You're an excellent listener.

22 to 25: You're better than average.

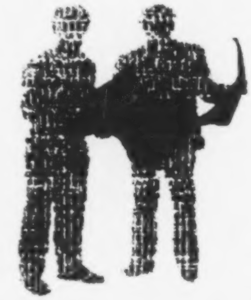
18 to 21: There's room for improvement.

17 or less: You're not an effective listener.

Source: Dr. Stephen Ash, "The Career Doctor," 2965 Picasso Drive, P.O. Box 927, Bonita, CA 92002.

Communication Skills

Active Listening Will Help You In The Workplace!



Do you make a conscious effort to improve your listening skills? Whether you are in the classroom, at an interview, or on the job, acquiring solid listening skills will play an important role in your success. In today's job market, employers value employees who get involved in the listening process, take the initiative to participate, and make contributions to any activity they undertake.

So, how can you listen better? Many people think listening and hearing have the same meaning. Did you ever hear someone speak and not listen to one word the person said? The secret to better listening involves a change in attitude. The listener has to become involved in the process. It is not enough to merely listen without participating in the conversation.

Active listening is more than hearing the spoken word. The listener has the responsibility of supplying feedback to the speaker. Feedback is the reaction to a given stimulus. For example, a person tells a joke (stimulus), and you laugh (reaction). The laughter is feedback telling the speaker that the message is understood. When you react and provide feedback to the speaker, you are practicing active listening. By providing feedback, the active listener can retain more of the conversation because he or she is part of the process.

How well do you listen? There are several stages of listening, and generally, we all shift through these levels during a conversation or presentation. Below are brief explanations of the

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Useful Quotes

At the request of some of our readers, we decided to feature a sampling of our favorite thought-provoking and inspirational quotes. We hope you enjoy them!

"Within our dreams and aspirations we find our opportunities."
Sue Atchley Ebaugh

"If you can imagine it, you can achieve it. If you can dream it, you can become it."
William Arthur Ward

"If an idea, I reasoned, were really a valuable one, there must be some way of realizing it."
Elizabeth Blackwell

"The distance doesn't matter; only the first step is difficult."
Mme. du Deffand

"The grand essentials to happiness in this life are something to do, something to love, and something to hope for."
Joseph Addison

"Everyone has a talent. What is rare is the courage to follow the talent to the dark place where it leads."
Erica Jong

"Continuous effort--not strength or intelligence--is the key to unlocking our potential."
Liane Cordes

"If I went back to college again, I'd concentrate on two areas: learning to write and to speak before an audience. Nothing in life is more important than the ability to communicate effectively."
Gerald R. Ford

(Continued from page 1)

levels of listening and suggestions you can use to brush up your listening skills.

The uninterested listener is bored and easily distracted. You may find a topic so dull that you cannot stop yourself from looking out the window. If you do not join the discussion, you will miss much of the information presented. Your contribution can put a different focus on the issue. Increased participation can bring new life into a presentation.

A casual listener may pay attention to one word out of ten words spoken. You would gain a slight understanding of the issues, if they are not complex or lengthy. Make an effort to listen. Find out how well you understand the topic. Ask questions. Have the speaker use other words (paraphrase) if the meaning or direction of the conversation is not clear to you.

The analytical listener examines every detail and questions the meaning of every word. You may hear every word but miss the meaning of the discussion. Ask general questions about the direction the presentation is heading. This method should allow you to discover the overall nature of the conversation.

The total listener is aware of the general direction and the content of the presentation. You are ready to provide feedback to the speaker and to exhibit the highest amount of involvement in the listening process.

Active listening can help anyone who practices this communication skill. If you understand directions or a presentation the first time, you can do more tasks quickly, and you are more efficient. In addition to acquiring public speaking and writing skills, getting involved in the listening process can help you make a good impression at an interview or on the job.

Drafters Welcome Technology

Computer-Aided Drafting

In the early 1980s, computer-aided drafting (CAD) courses began to surface in college and technical school programs. Even though drafting skills were still being taught to students in the traditional manner with pencil and paper, technology was making its way into their classrooms.

Instructors were finding out that their students could learn drafting and design principles on the computer. No longer would they have to manually prepare their drawings whenever the computer could assist them with the concepts and standards of current drafting practices.

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Typical Branches Of Engineering Graphics

Mechanical

Activities include: designing, testing, manufacturing, maintenance, construction

Products: materials, machines, devices

Specialized areas: power generation, transportation, manufacturing, power services, atomic energy, marine vessels

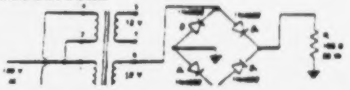
Architectural

Activities include: planning, designing, supervising

Products: buildings, environment, landscape

Specialized areas: commercial buildings, residential buildings, institutional buildings, environmental space forms

Electrical

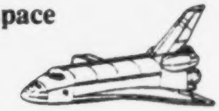


Activities include: designing, developing, supervising, programming

Products: computers, electronics, power, electrical

Specialized areas: power generation, power application, transportation, illumination, industrial electronics, communications, instrumentation, military electronics

Aerospace



Activities include: planning, designing, testing

Products: missiles, planes, satellites, rockets

Specialized areas: aerodynamics, structural design, instrumentation, propulsion systems, materials, reliability testing, production methods

Technical Illustrating

Activities include: promotion, designing, illustrating

Products: catalogues, magazines, displays

Specialized areas: new products, assembly instructions, presentations, community projects, renewal programs

Source: Cecil Jensen, Jay D. Helsel, and Donald D. Voisinet, "Computer-Aided Engineering Drawing - Using AutoCAD," Glencoe/McGraw-Hill.

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Drafting, as we know it today, is a graphic language of pictures that is understood by many people from many nations. A universal language, drafting represents the technical ideas and thoughts of people versus artistic drawings which show the more cultural side of people and their ideas.

Computer-aided drafting, therefore, offers drafting students an efficient method to do technical drawings that are less time consuming to prepare and meet the standards of traditional draftsmen and engineers. Students who are acquiring the knowledge needed to prepare their drawings on the computer have learned how to use the same terms, abbreviations, and drawing rules that have been in use since the turn of the century.

Employment Outlook

Drafters enter the job market under different classifications depending on the type of work they will be doing and their level of responsibility with the company. For example, you may aspire to the level of skill and responsibility of a senior drafter. Senior drafters work closely with engineers and architects to prepare the designs (drawings). Junior drafters work with detail; therefore, they are often called detailers. Their job is to make each part of the drawing more complete by giving it the proper dimensions and detail. There are also drafters who are called checkers. Checkers are responsible for "checking" the drawings for errors.

According to research, there are over 400,000 people working in computer-aided drafting positions throughout the United States. Women, in substantial numbers, are being attracted to this field. In junior and community colleges, universities, and vocational-technical schools, adult learners are finding that computer-aided drafting courses are not only interesting but also offer opportunities for employment.

If you are attracted to the field of computer-aided drafting, you many want to investigate the different areas where drafting skills are used to prepare drawings. The most recognized areas are mechanical, architectural, electrical, aerospace, and technical illustration. The side bar on this page shows examples of computer-aided drawings that were prepared by drafters.

Thanks to Joseph J. Mangie, CAD Instructor, Community College of Beaver County, for his contributions to this article.

The activity which is the subject of this publication was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.

PASSAGE Book Review

14,000 things to be happy about

In 1988, there was a popular song entitled "Don't Worry, Be Happy." The song bothered some serious-minded people who thought that the singer, Bobby McFerrin, was being too lighthearted about people's problems. McFerrin, though, was really saying that worrying won't make situations any better, and that there is still much to be happy about when things in life go wrong. Barbara Anne Kipfer, who wrote **14,000 things to be happy about**, seems to have an attitude similar to McFerrin's.

14,000 things to be happy about is a compilation of 14,000 things (words, phrases, thoughts, and ideas) that provides its readers with the opportunity to focus on the more positive aspects of life. Believe it or not, picking up this book and reading a page on a particularly stressful day can make your day a little easier. For example, if you had a rough morning, opening the book to "reminding yourself that everything you do, think, and dream matters" or "discovering that there is no real difference in the various cycles of your washing machine" or "lingering over coffee and buttered rolls" might bring a smile to your face. Quite often, just the mention of simple pleasures can help you to view your day from a brighter perspective.

This book is not meant to be a cure-all, but it can be enjoyable reading for anyone who needs a small, but refreshing, break from the frustrations and pitfalls of a typical day. **14,000 things to be happy about** is available at most bookstores and libraries.

Single Parent On The Move...

It's Never Too Late

Jackie Johnson likes to have heart-to-heart talks with single parents who may be thinking it's too late to return to school and train for a new career. PASSAGE's staff met Jackie whenever she began her externship as a computer-application specialist at The Midland Center, Inc.

At our request for motivational material, Jackie wrote the following open letter to PASSAGE's readers:

Hello,

My name is Jackie Johnson. I am thirty-five years young and the single parent of two children. Although my lifestyle is not always easy, I have learned to deal with problems that keep me from reaching my goals. Perhaps my thoughts and experiences can help you to overcome some barriers that have kept you from your goals.

First of all, you have to think positively. You will never know your potential until you put yourself to the test. If you want to strive toward some goal in life, take a few moments to picture yourself reaching that goal. Make a list of the things that will help you reach your goal, such as your willingness to learn new job skills.

Secondly, find someone in your circle of friends or family who can be a mentor and role model for you. My mom serves as my role model. After a divorce, she raised five children, returned to school to become an inhalation therapist, found employment, and has since retired from her job. However, she has not retired from learning. At the age of sixty four, she is still going to computer classes. She also learned how to prepare income tax forms and is a certified Notary.

Next, do some research. I found that I qualified for the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) program. This program gave me an opportunity to go to school to learn different computer software programs and their applications in the business world. Sure, I felt inadequate at first; however, it didn't take long before I was enjoying, more and more, my opportunity to learn. There are programs and organizations that can help you train for a job. Ask everyone about what opportunities may be available to you (see JTPA article in Dec. 1990's issue of PASSAGE).

Don't be too hard on yourself. I would bring my test results home from class, and my children would commend me on my grades. Even though a B+ was a good grade, I wanted to do better. My children thought that I was doing well and shouldn't be so hard on myself.

(Continued on page 5)

Pennsylvania Literacy Corps Teleconference

On March 13, 1991, the Pennsylvania Literacy Corps will be presenting the Pennsylvania Literacy Corps Teleconference for literacy providers, college students, and higher education administrators who are interested in learning about the Literacy Corps. The Teleconference will feature the unique Literacy Corps experiences of college students and literacy students, literacy practitioners, and program administrators in panel discussions.

"We know from experience that Literacy Corps works. The teleconference is one way we hope to expand Literacy Corps into a nationwide service movement," states John Briscoe, Director, PennSERVE: The Governor's Office of Citizen Service.

In the program, college students perform 40-60 hours of volunteer service and train in a credit-bearing course which may incorporate education, sociology, linguistics, reading, psychology, etc. This partnership between higher education and community literacy providers allows colleges and universities to benefit from strengthened community involvement in higher education; college students to enjoy enhanced-educational opportunities and the meaningful experience of helping others; and literacy providers receive the services of trained volunteers.

There are no teleconference fees, but participants must call Penn State's Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy [(814) 863-3777] to register and to obtain satellite down-link information. In Pennsylvania, there will be down-link sites at many of Penn State's campuses. Outside Pennsylvania, participants must arrange for their own Ku-band satellite down-link sites. Sites may be found at local colleges, universities, hospitals, or conference centers.

The teleconference is sponsored by PennSERVE: The Governor's Office of Citizen Service, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, and the Pennsylvania Literacy Corps and is coordinated by Penn State's Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy.

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Finally, don't stop working toward your goals. You will never experience success if you do not try to improve your education and chances for a job. Take one class or an entire semester of classes. Whatever you do, find a way to accomplish some task or acquire a new skill each week.

Yes, you will still face rough days. It is not always easy for me to juggle the responsibilities of parenthood with my assignments at school and in the workplace. Truthfully, I have even thought about quitting, but I'm so grateful that I haven't quit. Each day makes me feel more like I can do whatever I want to do with my life. Remember that it is alright to be afraid while you are learning to feel better about yourself.

The only limitations I have now are the ones I create for myself. Whenever I lose sight of my goals, I think of the saying "The only inadequate person is the person who will not try."

Please try to take advantage of the educational and employment opportunities offered in your area. I know you can find ways to succeed at whatever you try to do in life.

Sincerely,

Jackie Johnson

Interviewing

The ABC's Of Selecting Childcare

Today it is becoming more common for both parents in a household to work outside of the home. With this trend, working parents have many worries and responsibilities, and the need for dependable and educational childcare is ever increasing. If you are considering childcare in the near future, you can find the right childcare program by properly investigating various programs in your area.

First, you must know what to look for when seeking a suitable childcare provider. A suitable program will provide a happy, stable, and safe environment for your child as well as meet your expectations as a parent and career person. Important considerations when choosing appropriate childcare are the location, type of services provided (see side bar on page 7), and the interview.

Let's focus on the interview. A thorough interview will provide background information on the policies, procedures, and activities offered by the childcare provider. Visiting the site

(Continued on page 7)

Focus: The Speakers' Bureau

Instructors

Are your classes getting a little routine? Have you presented the same information, with little variation, five times in five months? How can you give your students information in a fresh, innovative way?

For a number of reasons, many instructors utilize guest speakers who are **experienced professionals** from the workplace. Although students are normally enrolled in a course for a specific gain, guest speakers can bring variety and an exciting change of pace for both the instructor and the students. **New insights and different opinions** offered by career professionals can add to the educational and career-direction information students are receiving in the class.

Speakers can be used to address many different topics. For example, most adult learners experience heightened levels of anxiety and agitation. An expert (i.e., counselor) who speaks about stress and handling stressful situations effectively would be able to supply useful information to those students dealing with anxiety. Another example might be handling money wisely. Most people need to learn how to budget and use their income in the best possible way. So, they might benefit from a consumer economics expert who is willing to address this topic. Finally, if your course is geared toward a very specific subject, such as career exploration, speakers (i.e., college or vocational-school representatives) can be located who will offer specific information to meet your students' needs.

Be sure to choose speakers who can address the needs and interests of the greatest number of people. For example, if your class is comprised largely of people who are preparing to receive their General Education Development diplomas, you do not want to engage a speaker from the master's degree program of the local college. However, your students might benefit from a speaker who addresses the problems of, and solutions for, those interested in securing employment after they obtain their high school equivalency diploma. In short, you want to choose speakers who offer valuable information to the largest percentage of your students.

If you are restricted to a certain time frame, be sure to schedule a reasonable number of speakers and to address scheduling conflicts. Also, be careful; some speakers' only intentions are to sell a certain product or service. Be sure he/she cares about the students and the subject.

With a little effort, you can locate speakers to suit many different purposes. Here are some useful examples to help you get started:

- **Contact** local colleges and trade schools to inquire whether they have employees who accept public speaking engagements.
- **Utilize** the phone book to locate special-interest groups and public-service agencies that would include public speaking as one of their services.
- **Ask** students, colleagues, and friends to recommend suitable speakers.
- **Keep** a pool of speakers to which you can add people, and network with the speakers to find additional information sources.

The ABC's Of Selecting Childcare

One of the steps a parent should follow before returning to school or starting a new career is to find adequate childcare. To accomplish this task, a parent must first decide what type of childcare is required for his/her child.

There are many different types of childcare available, and if a little effort is made to investigate various programs offered, one can be found to suit the parent's and the child's needs.

Here are a few examples of the childcare programs that are available and the services they offer:

Before- and After-School Childcare

A program exclusively for school-age children who are supervised by the caregiver before and after school. This program is commonly known as a latchkey program.

Day-Care Center

An out-of-home center which cares for more than 12 children at a time. The children's ages may not exceed 12 years. The care is not to be provided by family members.

Family Day-Care Home

A facility which operates out of an individual residence and cares for no more than 6 children at a time; the children's ages may not exceed 12 years.

Group Day-Care Home

A facility which operates out of an individual residence and cares for 7 to 11 children at a time; the children's ages may not exceed 12 years. There must be at least two adult supervisors present at all times.

Preschool

A school that services children 3 to 5 years of age. Normally, a preschool will follow a school calendar and will provide service for only half a day (i.e., 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.). A preschool primarily focuses on preparing the child for kindergarten.

Explore your possibilities, and choose carefully. Daycare is utilized by many working parents, and with proper research, you can find the right childcare provider.

(Continued from page 5)

while interviewing the prospective caregiver will allow you to see the environment and the day-to-day operations of the program. *To help you in the interview, the following questions may be useful when looking for suitable childcare:*

What is the child to adult ratio? The ratio will tell you if there is adequate adult supervision for the child. This ratio is usually matched to the age of the child. For example, an average ratio for children between the ages of four and twelve is approximately one adult to ten children, and an average ratio for newborns through three years of age is about one adult to every three or four children.

Is the provider licensed and regulated by the State? In Pennsylvania, childcare providers do have to meet certain guidelines before they are licensed by the State. Having a license and following state guidelines often show a caregiver's responsibility and commitment to providing quality service to children and their parents.

What qualifications does the provider have? An experienced childcare provider will be able to discuss the program's disciplinary, motivational, recreational, and educational activities and policies. The provider should be able to thoroughly answer all of the parent's questions concerning these topics.

Does the provider offer hot meals and/or snacks to the children? It is important that children receive a balanced diet during the time spent at a childcare program. Depending on the length of time away from home, will your child receive hot or cold meals and other acceptable snacks?

Is there a structured program? What kind of activities will your child participate in throughout a typical day? Be sure that the program you choose offers your child the opportunity to use his/her motor skills, interact in social activities, and develop his/her educational awareness on a daily basis.

What will happen if there is an emergency? If you cannot be reached, who will be contacted? Is there an adult on staff who knows first aide? Emergencies do happen, and you should know what to expect and feel confident that your child will be kept safe no matter what the emergency.

(Continued on last page)

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This newsletter was produced internally by The Midland Center, Inc., 617 Midland Avenue, Midland, PA 15059.

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Who is permitted to pick up your child and bring him/her home? Although your child may recognize a friend or grandparent, you need to know that your child will be at the site and safe when you return for him/her.

What are the daily hours of operation? A program with flexible hours enables the parents to be flexible as well. Some parents need a caregiver who will accept children at odd hours (e.g., after school, half days, early morning).

Are the fees reasonable? Are there supplemental funds available to help with childcare? If you are eligible, some caregivers have supplemental funds available or may know how you can obtain supplemental funds. Ask the caregiver about funding that may be available, and you just may save some money.

Prepare questions that you may want to ask a prospective childcare provider. Receiving positive answers to your questions, seeing the environment and atmosphere, and talking with staff members at various childcare programs will help you choose the right childcare provider for your child and lessen your anxiety while you are at work.

BCALMC
PASSAGE NEWSLETTER
617 MIDLAND AVENUE
MIDLAND, PA 15059

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PASSAGE

"Your workplace and job skills information newsletter"

February 1991

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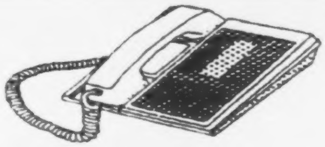
PASSAGE

"YOUR WORKPLACE AND JOB SKILLS INFORMATION NEWSLETTER" MAR., 1991



Results From Our Latest Reader Survey

In January 1991, the PASSAGE staff, with the assistance of the Volunteers In Service To America (VISTA) Literacy Corps, conducted a reader survey. Surveys for this project are typically made twice a year, and they enable us to refine and improve our newsletter.

A random sampling of individuals (instructors, volunteers, program directors, counselors) who receive PASSAGE were chosen and contacted by telephone. These selected participants were asked to answer a series of short questions that focused on PASSAGE's content, design, readability, utility, and effectiveness in the classroom.

Many useful suggestions, such as featuring more articles on providing job search for special needs' populations, incorporating more photographs, and including up-to-date information on job trends, were made by the participants. In the future, we intend to utilize as many of the new suggestions as possible while keeping in line with the various objectives and goals of the newsletter.

The PASSAGE staff and the VISTA Literacy Corps would like to take this opportunity to thank all survey participants. In addition, we always welcome your valuable input and guest article contributions.

PASSAGE Staff

The Right Stuff

When Job Opportunities Don't Knock

You have all the right stuff. You have your diploma in hand, you have sent your resumes and cover letters to employers on a daily basis, you have placed your follow-up calls to those employers, and you have practiced and refined your interview skills. This routine continues for several weeks (perhaps even months), and you still have not received any job offers.

Does this set of events sound all too familiar to you? If so, don't get discouraged! Job seekers from all walks of life are continually faced with this same dilemma. In fact, most people, at one time or another during their job search, ask themselves the question, "What's wrong with me?"

If you are spending excessive amounts of time trying to figure out this age-old mystery, you could very well be spinning your wheels. Besides, this type of thinking is extremely hazardous to your health, your mental well-being, and your overall attitude during the job search. Perhaps a change of attitude is necessary.

The reason for changing your outlook is simple--*there may not be definitive answers to this question*. Even so, most job seekers are bound and determined to uncover the real cause(s) of their failed job-search attempts.

"Never lose your most valuable asset -- your confidence."

Oftentimes, reading too much into the situation can be dangerous. For example, individuals start to rationalize their rejections by making comments such as: "I am too old"; "I don't have the right personality"; "I am not as pretty as the other candidates"; or "I have inadequate credentials." By believing these thoughts, job seekers set themselves up for becoming depressed and frustrated.

(Continued on page 2)

Tips On Preparing A Job Application

When you are conducting your job search, you will find that many employers require all job candidates to complete an application. Employers use these applications as a screening device and to record and file necessary information about potential and existing employees. (See the STUDENTaccesspage on page six.)

To increase your chances of obtaining an interview and projecting a positive image to the potential employer, you should become familiar with the following rules when preparing an application:

1. Take your time, and be neat.
2. Type or print in ink.
3. Do not abbreviate words.
4. Avoid misspelling words.
5. Maintain consistency (content and grammar).
6. Do not use "etc." in a sentence.
7. Organize all information (order of importance or chronologically).
8. Be specific; describe your accomplishments in detail.
9. Give only a positive reason for leaving a previous job.
10. State that salary is negotiable.
11. Mark full-time, part-time, and shift work to show flexibility.
12. Use action verbs.
13. Read and follow directions carefully.
14. Do not leave blank spaces.
15. Be honest with all information.
16. Prepare a reference sheet before filling out the application.
17. State that you will consider relocation.
18. Proofread the application and check for mistakes (organization, accuracy, spelling, and grammar).

Source: TOPPS Training Manual, TMCI.

(Continued from page 1)

Many factors come into play when employers make a hiring decision. In the majority of cases, job candidates never learn why they were screened out of a job. Employers usually don't share this information because:

- They could leave themselves open to lawsuits.
- Final hiring decisions may be less objective and more biased than they would like to admit.
- They don't have, or want to spend, the time to call or write the job candidate to explain and justify their decisions.

For these reasons, job candidates should concentrate on behaviors and actions that are more constructive in nature. Professional advice on resumes, letters, and interviews can go a long way, but trying to dissect the entire employment process when your job search seems stagnant can be counterproductive.

Although this is often easier said than done, job seekers should never forget the potential payoffs that will result from being ambitious, persistent, and optimistic. Take time in the early phases of your job search to decide what you want for yourself. After a thorough self-assessment, you must learn to concentrate on your strengths, your positive personality traits, your job-related skills and knowledge, and your goals and interests!

Know what you want in your job search and never give up until the job is yours. Above all, never lose your most valuable asset -- your confidence. This will carry you through the best and worst of times and will be the key factor in helping you land that job. Remember, it is not a losing battle unless you begin your job campaign thinking that way!

Expectations In The Workplace

I Am Not That *Type* Of Person

Does the thought of having to type a letter or report make you cringe? Many people dislike typing; however, the days when typing skills were only needed by a small percentage of individuals in the workplace are gone. In fact, with new technology (computers and word processors) present and widely accepted in the workplace, you will put yourself at a disadvantage if you are not familiar with how to use a typewriter and computer keyboard.

(Continued on page 3)

Budgeting Tips

Whether you are starting school, anticipating a new job, or establishing yourself at a new place of work, planning your budget is an option that you should take into consideration. Budgeting your money will help you to spend and save it in the best possible way.

If you are trying to plan and write a budget, there are several resources you can use to obtain budgeting information. For example, well stocked local libraries carry books, magazines, and pamphlets on budgeting. In addition, do not overlook your bank which can offer budgeting guidelines and provide options for the best use of your money. Finally, local colleges with business departments can offer you valuable budgeting tips and help you to locate consumer-awareness groups in your area.

When you are preparing your budget, the following guidelines can help you decide how much of your income should be devoted to each monthly expense:

Housing (15% - 30% of total income) - includes mortgage, rent, house repairs, insurance, and taxes.

Utilities (4% - 8%) - includes oil, garbage, gas, electricity, water, sewage, and phone.

Household furnishings (4% - 8%) - includes housekeeping supplies and food.

Clothing (3% - 10%)

Transportation (6% - 20%) - includes gas/oil, insurance, license, repairs, parking, and public transportation.

Health (varies) - includes medical, dental, medicine, and vitamins.

Recreation/entertainment (2% - 6%) includes admissions to movies/games and hobbies.

Personal improvement (1% - 5%) - includes haircuts, grooming, books, magazines, lessons, tuition, and fees.

Life insurance (varies)

Allowance (1-4%)

Based on a speech by Sidney Elken, Consumer Advocate, Alliance for Consumer Protection.

(Continued from page 2)

Why are more people expected to have typing skills and use computers in the workplace? Today's work world requires employees at all levels to produce and retrieve information in a fast, organized, and accurate manner. Computers and word processors have enabled individuals in the workplace (managers, secretaries, cashiers, accountants, reservationists, and sales clerks to name a few) to become more productive and efficient. Understanding and being comfortable using a keyboard are important factors that will better prepare you for the work environment.

How do you get started? *If you need to become familiar with the typewriter/computer keyboard, the following suggestions can help you with taking that first step:*

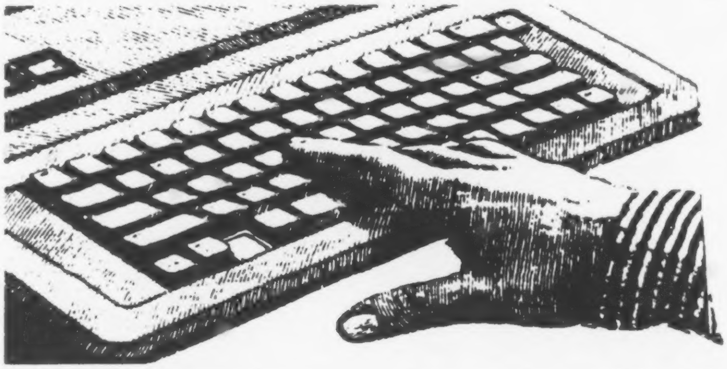
- Find time at work or school to practice on a typewriter or computer. Just a few minutes a day can help. If you are having difficulty, do not be afraid to ask for help; everyone needs help when he/she first starts learning.
- There are many typing-tutor computer programs on the market. In fact, one may already be installed on a computer that is available for your use; just ask.
- The libraries may have typewriters and instruction books that are available to the public.

If you are interested in a structured training program, contact the continuing education department of local colleges, or check with private computer-training centers in your area.

In addition, listed below are three easy-to-operate computer programs (available to the general public) that can help you obtain a basic understanding of the computer keyboard and can assist you in your job-search campaign:

- **WORKPLACE** is available at many local libraries in Pennsylvania (See October 1989's issue of PASSAGE). This program provides information on skills assessment, education and training options, financial assistance for schooling, and the preparation of resumes and cover letters.

(Continued on page 4)



Getting Control Of Your Time

If you ask yourself these questions periodically, you'll probably use your time better:

- **What am I thinking about at this moment?** If you're not thinking about the task you're involved in, you're not going to be as effective as you could be. If you're not in the mood for a particular job, you'll prolong the agony. Push yourself to get that job done to get to the next one.
- **Do I say "yes" too often?** In sorting out the demands of your time, learn when to say "no." It is good to do things to help others, but be sure you're not doing so many tasks that you don't have enough time to accomplish the things you consider to be more important.
- **Do I let the concept of time control me?** Of course there are certain "musts" related to time. But other than those, have you become a slave to the clock? For one week, try eating only when you're hungry, going to sleep only when you're tired, and generally breaking out of certain time rut habits.
- **When do I have time by myself to do things that are important to me?** If you don't, rethink the way you're using your days. Set aside and take advantage of quiet time each day. Include time in your schedule for relaxing.

*Source: **Straight Talk**, Real Estate Education Company, 500 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, IL 60610.*

The activity which is the subject of this publication was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.

(Continued from page 3)

- **ALEX** (Automated Labor Exchange) is available at the Pensylvania Job Center located in your local Unemployment Compensation office. ALEX lists the job openings that match your education and experience.
- **Job Trails** will be available July 1991, at many area libraries, employment agencies, and adult education centers (see December 1990's issue of PASSAGE). Job Trails helps adult learners (4th to 8th grade levels) acquire basic skills that are commonly used on the job.

With a little practice on a regular basis, you can acquire a skill that will always be useful and will improve your chances for employment. Yes, you can be that type of person!

Preparing For The Interview

Dress For Success

In addition to having all the proper job-search materials (resume, cover letter, and references) and qualifications (education and experience), job seekers must be certain that they are presenting the right image to the potential employer. First impressions most definitely count, and wearing the appropriate clothing is an important consideration for all job hopefuls.

Dress for the interview not the job. This is always a good rule-of-thumb to follow when you have secured an interview. When preparing for the interview, do not be concerned with what employees in your career field or vocation wear to work; be concerned with impressing the interviewer.

A well-dressed interviewee should always think "professional" and "conservative." Also, an interviewee should have two interview outfits. Having two outfits will be beneficial if you should have to attend a second interview.

So, what is acceptable to wear? *Here is a list of suggestions that will help you project the appropriate image at an interview:*

- **Wear** outfits that are dark blue or gray. Male interviewees should wear a two-piece suit with a tie that complements the suit. If a two-piece suit is not available, wear a sport coat with matching trousers. Female interviewees should wear a suit with a below-the-knee skirt and a blouse. If a jacket is unobtainable, a blouse and skirt would be acceptable.

(Continued on page 5)

List Of Resources

Here is a selection of books that can help you better prepare to enter and be successful in today's job market. This list highlights topics such as employers' expectations, communication skills on the job, and interpersonal skills. Most of these resources can be found at the local library/bookstore or by writing to the listed addresses.

Blow Your Own Horn: How to Market Yourself and Your Career by Jeffrey Davidson, *amacom*, 135 W. 50th St., New York, NY 10020.

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen R. Covey, Simon and Schuster, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020.

Power Packed Writing That Works by the editors of *communication briefings*, 140 S. Broadway, Pitman, NJ 08071.

How to Be Prepared to Think On Your Feet by Stephen C. Rafe, Harper Business, 10 E. 53rd St., New York, NY 10022.

Megatrends 2000: Ten New Directions for the 1990s by John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene, William Morrow and Co., 105 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016.

Taking Charge: Making the Right Choices by Perry M. Smith, Avery Publishing Group Inc., 350 Thorens Avenue, Garden City Park, NY 11040.

The Official Guide to Success by Tom Hopkins, Champion Press, P.O. Box 1969, Scottsdale, AZ 85252.

(Continued from page 4)

- **Use** only a limited amount of jewelry. For male interviewees, wedding bands, rings (minimal), and wristwatches are acceptable. For female interviewees, wristwatches, small studded earnings, wedding bands, and rings (minimal) are appropriate. In addition, females should wear a limited amount of cosmetics.
- **Use** cologne sparingly. In a small and enclosed office, the scent of strong cologne can be distractive and possibly offensive to the interviewer.
- **Wear** clean and polished dress shoes. Dark shoes are a safe bet for male interviewees. Pumps with 1 1/2" to 2" heels that complement their outfits are a wise choice for female interviewees.
- **Having** a briefcase is acceptable for male interviewees (not always necessary). A briefcase or small conservative purse is acceptable for female interviewees.

Follow these guidelines when preparing for an interview, and you will increase your self-confidence and convey the proper image to a potential employer.

Communication Skills

Breaking The Public Speaking Barrier

Would you pass up a chance for a career opportunity or advancement because the job requires you to make speeches? Many people do. In fact, a majority of people are uncomfortable and even terrified at the thought of having to speak in front of an audience. However, what most people fail to realize is that public speaking is a learnable skill and that everyone can overcome this anxiety and become a successful public speaker.

Believe it or not; a good speaker does not have to be born with a talent that allows him/her to win over an audience. In most

(Continued on page 7)

Preparing A Job Application

Instructions

Make several enlarged copies of this sample-job application, and practice completing the information in a consistent, accurate, and orderly manner. Use the application-preparation tips on page two as a guideline. Also, have your fellow students and your instructor review your application and offer suggestions. Remember to put yourself in the place of the employer. This will enable you to be more critical of your answers and what image you are conveying to the reviewer of your application.

XYZ Company

An Equal Opportunity Employer
Application For Employment

Last Name ______________ First __________ Middle __________
Present Address ______________________________
City ______________ State __________ Zip Code __________
Phone Number ( ) ______________________________
Social Security Number ______________________________

Alternative Contact Person

Name ______________________________
Address ______________________________
City ______________ State __________ Zip Code __________
Job Title You Are Applying For ______________________________
Location and Office Desired ______________________________
Minimum Salary Acceptable ______________________________
Are You Willing To Relocate? ______ Are You Under 18 Years Of Age? ______
Date You Can Start ______________________________
Will You Work Shifts? ____ Overtime? ____ Part Time? ____ Temporary? ____
Do You Have A Valid Driver's License? ____ State? ____ Number? __________
Are You Authorized To Work In The U.S.? ______________________________
Do You Have Any Relatives Working For This Company? ______________
Have You Ever Completed An Interview With This Company? ______________
Have You Ever Been Convicted Of A Criminal Offense? If Yes, Give Date, Charge, And Disposition Of Each Conviction Below ______________
____
____

Employment History

May we contact your present or previous employer? Yes ☐ No ☐
Firm ______________________ Telephone ( ) ______________
Address ______________________________
Nature Of Work And Responsibilities ______________________
____
____
Title ______________ Department ______________
Starting Salary ______________________________
Immediate Supervisor (Name and Title) ______________________
Dates of Employment: From ______________ To ______________
Reason For Leaving The Organization ______________________
____
____

Education

Dates Attended	Name and Address of School	Did You Graduate?	Course and Degree
19__ Month To 19__ Month	High School	Yes ☐ No ☐ GED ☐	Major
19__ Month To 19__ Month	College or University	Yes ☐ No ☐ Credit Hours ________	Degree and Major
19__ Month To 19__ Month	Other Schooling or Training	Yes ☐ No ☐	Certificate/ License

Explain why you are the best candidate for this position.
____
____
____
____

Careers That Require Public Speaking Skills

Before you enter a particular program at a college/vocational school, new career field, or community organization, check to see what types of basic skills are needed to get the job done. There is a good chance that you may need solid public-speaking skills for that position or a future promotion.

The following career fields and extracurricular duties require individuals to possess oral communication skills:

Public Relations' Specialist - Makes presentations to employers, employees, clients, and the community.

Salesman - Demonstrates a product or describes a particular service to an audience of potential customers.

Officer or Leader of Civic/Social Organization - Presents financial and operational information to members of the organization.

Teaching Professional - Presents and explains information on a one to-one basis and in a group setting.

Manager/Foreman - Organizes and relays information to groups of employees, employers, and clients.

Officer of a Church Group or Organization - Speaks to large gatherings of people and must often motivate and inspire individuals.

Receptionist - Greets groups of people (employers, employees, and clients) and must convey information about the company in a pleasant manner.

Health-Care Professionals - Speaks to and informs patients, interns, school of education students, and community groups.

(Continued from page 5)

cases, effective speakers are average people who just took the time and made the effort to learn the importance of public speaking. Basically, it is a matter of convincing yourself that you can do it, and you can!

A good start is to observe people who are effective speakers and learn what methods or approaches they use to get their message to the audience, be accepted by the audience, educate the listeners, and make the audience and themselves comfortable. Individuals who speak at local PTA meetings, appear on talk shows, or provide instruction are all examples of speakers who have many skills that the observer can learn.

Before preparing a speech, there are three factors that you should consider. These factors are body language, routine, and belief system, and they are important ingredients of a successful presentation. *Let's discuss these factors in more detail:*

- **Body Language** - By observing an admired public speaker, you get to see how he/she uses body movements and postures during a presentation. Effective speakers will most likely walk with their shoulders back and their heads high. This reveals that they are relaxed and confident in their abilities. Also, speakers often use hand and arm gestures to emphasize certain words and points during the presentation. Body language is an important part of public speaking, and it is necessary to understand the messages it can send to an audience.

- **Routine** - Watching the routine that people use when making a presentation is the next consideration. Establishing a routine enables you to be more comfortable with the entire process. For example, if you have to give a presentation on material that is new to you, it would be to your advantage to practice it several times in front of an audience of friends, family, or employees. This is a smart procedure or routine to follow before you present the speech to a group of strangers. Their feedback will help you prepare an effective speech. Ask them to be critical. Also, try to think of questions that the audience may ask. This will help you satisfy their needs and enable you to be an organized and efficient speaker.

- **Belief system** - Lastly, you should examine your own personal thoughts and beliefs about public speaking. By repeating positive thoughts in your mind and practicing this method, you can change the way you think about public speaking. Before you give a speech, try repeating these sentences over and over to yourself: "I'm glad I'm here. I'm glad you're here. I've practiced, and I know my

(Continued on last page)

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This newsletter was produced internally by The Midland Center, Inc., 617 Midland Avenue, Midland, PA 15059.

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(Continued from page 7)

subject. I care about this information and the audience." When you focus on your strengths and caring about the people in the audience, it will be hard to be intimidated. Give this approach a try; you will be pleasantly surprised by the results!

Once you have become familiar with the importance of body language, routine, and your belief system in public speaking, you are ready to gain some practical experience. This will give you the opportunity to improve and polish your skills. Make presentations in the classroom, at work, or at local meetings in your community. In time, you will find that you can be successful speaking to an audience, and your confidence will greatly increase.

Remember, as you prepare to enter a new career or advance at your present job, acquiring the ability to be an effective public speaker will expand your employment opportunities. Many employers look for individuals who are confident in their communication skills and themselves. See the sidebar on page seven for information on jobs and duties that require public speaking skills.

Source: Adapted from the article "Addressing The Fear Of Public Speaking" by Dr. Ken Blanchard, Today's Office, January, 1991.

BCALMC
PASSAGE NEWSLETTER
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PASSAGE

"Your workplace and job skills information newsletter"

March 1991

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PASSAGE

"YOUR WORKPLACE AND JOB SKILLS INFORMATION NEWSLETTER" APRIL, 1991

Education And Employment

The College-Bound Adult Learner

Thoughts of going to college can conjure up a mixed bag of feelings in even the most motivated of individuals who have already decided to enroll in programs of higher education. The college experience, with all of its obvious benefits, can be intimidating to first-time campus goers, especially when they feel they may be older and less prepared than recent high-school graduates.

The goal of this issue is to inform PASSAGE's readers of why they may want to consider going to college, what they may generally expect from college life, and how they can prepare themselves to be more successful in college. To accomplish our goal, this special edition of PASSAGE will...

- **highlight** the value of a college education to adult learners seeking employment.
- **address** the more common fears adult learners have as they consider the advantages of going to college (STUDENTaccesspage).
- **explore** the subject of psychology, a basic course of study which most college students encounter in their higher education programs.
- **stress** the importance of study skills adult learners can acquire before they start taking college level courses.

College Advisement

The Helping Team

Colleges have many people who can help you learn more about their institutions, programs, and services. They can be called "the helping team" because their job is to help you with any questions or concerns you may have before, during, and even after your college experience.

Counselors are members of this team. They may be called academic, vocational, business, personal, or career counselors, but their mission is the same--to provide you with useful information.

When you call any college, it is to your advantage to ask to speak with a counselor. If the college has many different types of counselors who work with students, state the purpose of your call. For example, you might explain that you are unsure of what course of study interests you and would like to speak to a career counselor.

College instructors can also help you make decisions about programs of study. Ask the college's counselor if there are instructors who will meet with incoming students to discuss specific information about their courses. Instructors will often have outlines of the subject material they teach and descriptions of assignments you will have to complete in their classes.

Librarians, working in the campus library, can also be very valuable resource people. They can tell you how the library system is designed to help students with their studies. College librarians can teach you how to access books, magazines, video tapes, and many more instructional tools that can help you succeed in college.

College students are important members of the helping team. Most colleges have social and/or academic organizations that have other adult learners like you as members. These individuals can not only answer your questions about specific

(Continued on page 2)

? ? ? ? ?

Important Questions You Need To Ask

1. Does the college offer a flexible schedule of classes (day, evening, Saturday options)?

2. Is there a day-care service on or near the college's campus?

3. Are campus tutors and/or a self-paced learning center available to help students having difficulty with their studies?

4. Will there be access to public transportation and/or student parking facilities?

5. What are the costs of part time and full-time enrollment, and what financial aid may be available?

6. What steps need to be taken to be admitted to a college?

7. How are students evaluated in their courses, and when do they receive their grades?

8. What campus social activities are available to the adult learner?

There are many other questions you will have to ask before making your decision to enroll in a college program of study. Try listing your questions on paper before you approach a college for information. This will help you organize your thoughts and receive information that is important to you.

(Continued from page 1)

programs of study, but they can also provide you with an inside look at campus life from the adult learner's perspective. Adult learners already enrolled in college can offer tremendous support to new students.

In summary, every college is involved with recruiting and helping new students like you. For these reasons, you should not be hesitant to call upon members of a college's helping team before you make such an important decision about your future.

Write Right Away

Developing Writing Habits for College

I can write!
I can write!
I can write!
I can write!
I can write!

Your college experience will most likely include the practice of writing research papers, compositions, journals, articles, and poetry, perhaps. Writing is an important skill you will use to express your ideas, show what you have learned, and influence others.

There are many ways you can start today to prepare yourself to write well in college. The most overlooked way to successful writing is to **start reading**. Reading newspapers, novels, textbooks, and magazines will help you understand how writers prepare their information and use words, titles, facts, and other devices such as pictures and graphs to gain their readers' attention.

Next, you can further analyze what you are reading to discover the different **styles of writing** that are used in publications. Categorize what you are reading as any combination of the following: formal or informal, entertaining, factual, interesting, and informative. Ask yourself if you understand the writer's purpose for preparing the information in the style chosen for you, the reader.

Besides reading what others have written, you must **become a writer**. One of the easiest ways to begin your writing experience is for you to keep a journal. Decide what type of journal would best assist you with gaining writing skills for college and the workplace.

(Continued on page 3)

Daily Writing Habits

Here are a few simple ideas that go a long way to help you develop your writing skills for college and the workplace:

- **Take advantage of your junk mail.** Read the letters you receive that are written to sell you a product and/or service. Discover how the writers used words, ideas, and other techniques to influence you to become a customer.
- **Write a letter to a friend or relative.** Ignore the temptation to use the phone every time you wish to speak with someone. Not only can you learn to express yourself in an organized manner using written words, but you can also save money by avoiding those costly long-distance calls.
- **Organize "to do" lists for your family and yourself.** Everyone needs to think about home repairs, grocery items, and household chores. For example, you might want to list: a) what chores need to be done, b) what order will be followed to complete them, c) who will be responsible for those chores, and d) when you expect them to be completed.
- **Find reasons to write for special occasions and events.** Writing messages, invitations, poems, or greeting cards can not only be fun but also rewarding experiences for beginning writers. It is easy to purchase a greeting card, but it is more beneficial to write your own. You can use carefully-chosen words to tell people how you feel, to invite others to a party, or to thank them for something.
- **Send a letter to the editor of a newspaper.** There are many local and worldwide subjects that may interest you enough to offer your opinion and comments for others to read. Having your letter published can make you feel good about the benefits of writing.

(Continued from page 2)

For example, your **journal** could be a place to write down how you feel about current topics being discussed in newspapers and on radio and television (i.e., the Persian Gulf). A "current events' journal" will help you state your position on many subjects and challenge you to defend your feelings with facts, logic, and research.

Another valuable way to acquire good writing skills is to take a **writing class**. Many colleges, civic centers, and adult education programs offer free or low-cost classes for beginning writers. You can learn the mechanics of good writing such as the proper use of grammar and punctuation. You can learn how to improve your spelling and organize paragraphs, story lines, and outlines. You can also discover the many other rules that govern the quality of writing for college and the workplace (i.e., how to write footnotes for a college research paper or memorandums in the workplace).

Whether you like or hate to write, **you will have to write often in college**. Many reluctant writers have found the practice of writing less frightening whenever they have already invested time and effort to prepare themselves for college-writing experiences. You have that same opportunity to lessen your fears by writing something every day (see accompanying side bar for daily writing habits' list).

The Question

Can You Avoid Computers In College?

The answer to this question is ***maybe***; that is, you may be able to avoid using computers in college; however, you should know that an increasing number of colleges are adding a basic computer course to the curriculums of most of their degree programs.

Besides its obvious reputation as a tool for word processing, the computer can assist college students with new and exciting applications (uses) in very different occupational areas. There are many software programs designed for the computer that will help students learn how to do various jobs within their chosen career fields.

(Continued on page 4)

Ready, Set, Study

Do Your Students Know How To Study?

CONTEMPORARY BOOKS offers adult learners strategies for building, improving, and perfecting their study skills. The workbook series, *Ready, Set, Study: Building Study Skills* (4.0-6.0 reading level) and *Ready, Set, Study, Improving Study Skills* (6.0-8.0 reading level), was written to help adult learners discover the link between good study habits and enhanced learning abilities.

Here are a few of the comments CONTEMPORARY makes about these workbooks:

- **prepares** student mentally for the study process
- **incorporates** easy-to-follow lesson formats for quick mastery of skills
- **integrates** an abundance of visual aids to teach students how to better interpret graphs, maps, charts, and cartoons

Many of the topics and skills discussed in these workbooks will have lifelong meaning and application once adult learners leave your classrooms and progress to the demands of studying in college. Students will learn how to develop a winning attitude, stay motivated, and use specific strategies for studying different types of information.

If your students need to learn how to study, perhaps you may want to review these new workbooks from CONTEMPORARY. The field representative in Pennsylvania is Myron Hallock (215-233-3544 or 215-672-7304).

(Continued from page 3)

Here are a few general descriptions of software programs and explanations of how they are being used in some college classrooms and more often in today's workplaces:

Inventory-Control Software

Any company or organization that has to monitor a product from the production to distribution stage can benefit from inventory-control computer software. College students and workers alike learn how to put data (information) about the product into the computer and analyze and retrieve that data when business decisions need to be made.

Accounting-Software Programs

There's a tremendous selection of computer-software programs that aid employers with their financial responsibilities within the company. Real estate, footwear, insurance, and food industries, to name a few, use computer-accounting software to track buying and selling figures, employee-payroll expenditures, and customer billings.

Transportation-Software Applications

Freight haulers and movers can now use computer software to list weights of cargo, calculate fuel taxes, and trouble-shoot maintenance problems with their vehicles. Computer software is also being used to analyze traffic patterns, customer travel needs, and road conditions to help route and schedule buses and municipal vehicles.

Law-Enforcement Software

Computers and law-enforcement software are being used to improve the security systems of banks, college campuses, companies, and hospitals. Many law-enforcement tasks are being handled by advanced software programs that can trace a license plate number or analyze evidence discovered at the scene of a crime (e.g., blood, hair samples, and fingerprints).

Bilingual Word Processing

Type any document in English, and these computer software programs will translate and print the same document in another language. These exciting software programs work quickly to report information that can be understood by international audiences.

Psychological Research

Academic, medical, and military personnel can use computer software for psychological research. These unique software programs have been designed to help individuals understand how children learn new concepts, what side effects can be expected from new medications, and how many stress-related illnesses can be linked to combat experience.

Careers in Psychology

Below is a list of jobs that require an extensive knowledge of human behavior. While it can be difficult to enter this field in today's job market, understanding its importance in the workplace and to society in general is one ingredient of a well-rounded education.

School psychologists - test pupils, analyze learning problems, and evaluate teaching methods, curriculums, textbooks, and educational films.

Industrial psychologists - help select and train workers and improve working conditions, employee morale, and staff cooperation.

Environmental psychologists - are especially concerned with ecological problems like smog, water pollution, crowding, and noise.

Community psychologists - specialists in community mental health who are concerned with the social environment and the way schools and other institutions might better serve individual human needs.

Health psychologists - deal with the ways we can improve health by altering our behavior.

The activity which is the subject of this publication was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.

What Makes Us Tick?

The Subject of Psychology

If you are planning to earn a degree after completing your adult education program, a psychology course will most likely be on your list of required subjects of study. New students entering college are often curious about what they will learn in a psychology class and how this information will be important to them whenever they graduate and find employment. The following article will hopefully address both of these concerns.

What is psychology?

Psychology, for the most part, is the study of human behavior. Since the beginning of time, people have taken an interest in "what makes others and themselves tick." To study human behavior and the factors that influence it, research is constantly being completed on how the body and brain work together.

What has been discovered is that the body and brain have a complex relationship. This relationship involves a look at the way individuals think about things and how they react in different situations. Studies of human behavior have been completed on infants, young persons, and middle-age and senior adults.

The physical activities of people such as walking, talking, working, and playing provide a part of the subject material for studying the body's actions. Then, the processes of thinking, remembering, learning, and forgetting provide a segment of the subject material for studying the mind's activities. Mix in an exploration of the human emotions of anger, frustration, sadness, and happiness, and discover the more common topics of discussion in psychology classes.

All of this information about human behavior comes together to make up the field of psychology. How is the information gathered? Observation is a key method that helps researchers, psychologists, and even you gather information about human behavior. Everyone can observe others in real-life situations and draw conclusions about their behavior.

In addition, the study of psychology includes doing face-to face interviews with people or asking them to complete opinion surveys and questionnaires while remaining anonymous. Magazines, newspapers, and radio-talk shows are constantly asking their audiences to provide psychological information on various topics. For example, a radio station might survey their listeners to discover how their audience feels about violence, the job market, or the problem of world hunger.

(Continued on page 7)

STUDENTaccesspage Focus: Exploring The College Option

Introduction: This month's STUDENTaccesspage was written to generate a discussion of factors which influence adult learners' decisions about attending college. Instructors can creatively develop the information to best serve the interest and academic levels of their students. This discussion exercise can lead to further career-development activities (e.g., tours of local college facilities and presentations by college officials).

Here are a number of insightful questions that help adult learners explore the option of enrolling in a college after completing a high school equivalency program.

1. Do I value my current education? How has my education helped me relate to others? -- build my self esteem? -- accomplish tasks (e.g., write letters, teach my child math concepts, or organize social events)?

2. What academic skills do I already possess that will help me succeed in college? Be specific and cite examples (i.e., I can complete basic math problems, so I will most likely be able to do well in a college-level, basic math course).

3. What academic skills do I need to acquire or improve before I enroll in college-level courses? Once again, be specific and cite examples (i.e., I had difficulty spelling words correctly in my GED essay-writing assignments).

4. What social skills do I already practice in my daily life, and how might those skills be used in college? (For example, I feel comfortable talking to close friends and relatives, but I feel it may be more difficult to converse with college students and instructors.)

5. Do I know someone or can I contact anyone who is currently enrolled in college? What questions can I ask this individual about the quality of college life? List all possible questions. (For example, how much time do you devote each week to studying?)

6. What is my greatest concern when I think about the option of going to college (i.e, lack of child care)? What other concerns do I need to discuss with others?

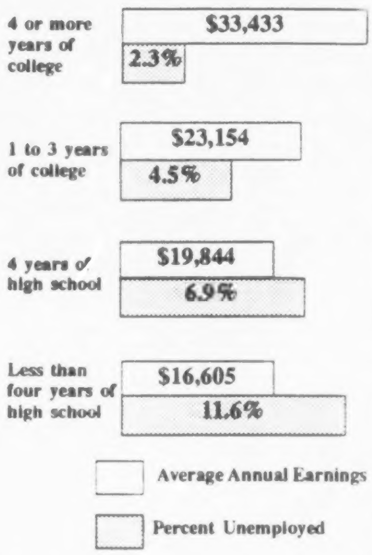
7. Is there a right time to make a decision about enrolling in college?

8. How much time, thought, money, and effort are needed to make an intelligent decision about the option of a college education?

9. Is a college education necessary for me to accomplish my goals in life? If my answer is yes--or no, the reasons are....

10. What plans do I have to make should I decide to attend college?--not to attend college?

Education Helps Improve Our Earnings And Job Security



Source: BLS Occupational Outlook Quarterly, Fall 1987.

☞ **Note: Average Annual Earnings' figures are for the U.S. and should not be interpreted as entry wages of individuals with educational levels described.**

(Continued from page 5)

When responding to opinion surveys, individuals will often reveal their feelings in great detail and talk about their actions in specific situations, providing the field of psychology with more information about human behavior and the factors that influence it. Often, organizations that have products, services, or causes (i.e., save the environment) to sell review opinion survey and questionnaire information to build effective advertising and outreach campaigns.

In a psychology course, you will learn about the more recognized studies, observations, interviews, surveys, and questionnaires done by people from the field of psychology and research. Hopefully, you will also have an opportunity to participate in the study of human behavior by doing your own research project. Perhaps you will even make attempts to predict human behavior based on the research of others and the personal analyses you have completed for the course.

In the world of work, you will find many ways to apply the knowledge you have learned from your psychology course and life experiences. Motivating your coworkers is one example, and knowing how to approach them with your problems, concerns, and criticisms is another skill that can be acquired through an understanding of human behavior.

After taking one class or a series of psychology courses, you may even consider the possibility of entering a career field that demands an extensive knowledge of human behavior (see "Careers In Psychology" on page 5). In contrast to this possibility, you may find the study of human behavior somewhat uninteresting or even unnecessary. What your feelings may be in the future is difficult to predict; however, you will find that there are always some exciting discussions whenever the subject of psychology is brought up in college.

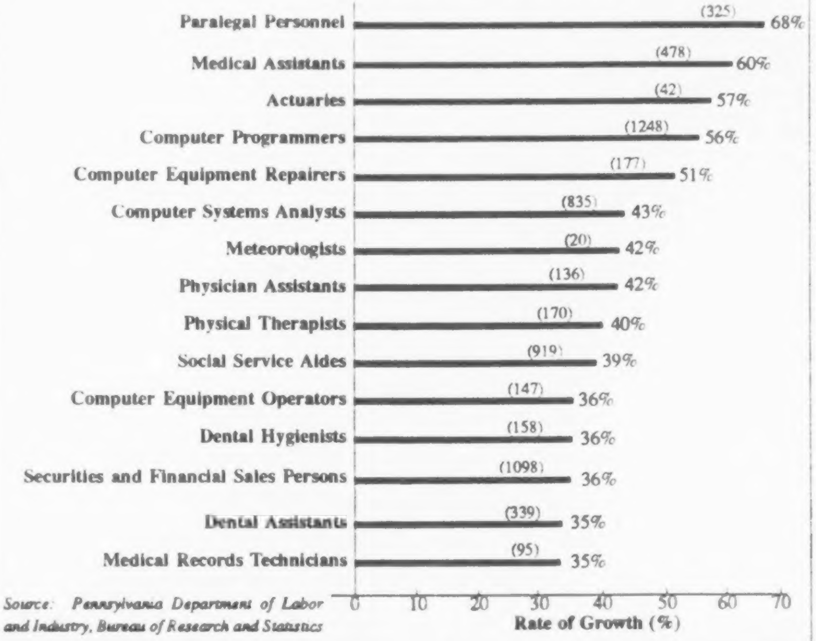
"The greatest mistake you can make in life is to be continually fearing you will make one."

Elbert Hubbard

Fastest Growing Occupations In Pennsylvania

1984 - 1995

Figures in parenthesis are job openings per year



Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, Bureau of Research and Statistics

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Money, Money, Money!

We all know there are different factors which influence individuals to attend colleges and earn degrees. You may consider earning a college degree in an area that interests you tremendously. For example, you have always liked to draw buildings; therefore, a degree in architectural drafting might interest you.

Sometimes, you pursue a degree because of a natural ability you possess. For example, you relate well to people--a degree in social work is considered because of this ability. Other times, a degree would bring you new employment opportunities that are not currently available to you. For example, you can type 60 w.p.m., but employers will only hire applicants with secretarial degrees.

These factors work individually, or in unison, to help people make decisions about earning college degrees. However, MONEY is one factor that should be considered whenever decisions are being made about personal investments in higher education. For example, this is the degree you want--this is how your earnings will be affected by acquiring a degree.

A recent article in USA Today reported that someone with an associate degree had the ***average added monthly earnings*** *of...*

- $773 to $1,006 compared with a high school dropout.
- $307 to $537 compared with a high school graduate.
- $198 to $370 compared with the holder of a vocational certificate.

The article also reported the income difference between individuals having associate degrees and others having bachelor degrees--$352 to $371 in favor of the bachelor degree.

Source: USA Today, January 8, 1991, and U.S. Department of Commerce.

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"Your workplace and job skills information newsletter"

April 1991

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PASSAGE

Special Instructors' Edition - May 1991

Employee Handbooks

A Career-Development Tool

What does the company expect from its employees?

Whenever individuals begin working for a company, they have many questions about the general terms and conditions of employment. Employers, to prepare for these questions, often publish and distribute handbooks (personnel manuals) to new employees.

These handbooks can be rather comprehensive texts or concise documents of a few pages in length. While some companies prefer not to have employee handbooks, the following articles represent information which has been selected by companies for their handbooks.

Before your students read this issue, they must know that employee handbooks are not contracts of employment. Also, employers generally state they have the right, at any time, to change or discontinue information described in their handbooks. In addition, your students may become members of collective bargaining units (i.e., unions) and guided by other terms of employment not described in a company's employee handbook.

Regardless of their employment status, your students can benefit from knowing more about the workplace issues presented in these handbooks. PASSAGE would like you to help them discover those benefits.

Thank You,
Editorial Staff

Companies

What You Don't Know Can Hurt You!

It's shocking how little information employees know about the companies they work for each day. Although companies generally have histories of development and growth, their employees do not always have a clear understanding of those histories.

Company Histories

Most employee handbooks begin by supplying historical information to new employees. This information is extremely important because new employees should be able to speak intelligently about the history (e.g., dates of company operation and business accomplishments) and nature of the business (e.g., products and/or service descriptions) to others outside of the company. Employees can use this information to help their company build a positive image and respectable position in the community. Likewise, historical information can help employees view how their jobs will contribute to the company's overall success.

Larger companies may have more than one site of operation and several employee departments within those locations. Employee handbooks often list these sites, their addresses, phone numbers, and brief descriptions of the duties and responsibilities performed at those locations. This type of information becomes useful to employees who may be transferred and/or promoted within a company.

Their Missions and Slogans

A mission statement often accompanies the historical information of a company. What is a mission statement?

(Continued on page 2)

Everyone's Concern

On-The-Job Safety

Employee handbooks sometimes devote a section to the subject of on-the-job safety. Accidents and potential causes of injury of employees create great emotional and financial hardship for companies and their workers. Together, employers and employees must monitor work procedures and environments for better ways to complete their jobs safely.

Emergencies on the job are generally handled in a predetermined manner which is designed by the company. Employees need to be familiar with the company's policy for handling emergencies. Larger companies may even have a nurse and trained medics as employees, whereas smaller companies may depend solely on outside medical assistance.

There are a number of companies that welcome, and even reward, suggestions made by employees that improve safety records within those companies. Employees often receive company and national recognition for their improved safety records.

In less hazardous environments, employees are learning Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) in the event of life-threatening emergencies which occur in the workplace. This life-saving technique is being taught to employees by representatives of the American Red Cross and the American Heart Association. Many companies encourage their employees to attend CPR classes sponsored during and outside of company time.

(Continued from page 1)

The Midland Center, Inc.'s (TMCI) mission statement will help answer this question for you.

- The Midland Center, Inc., experienced professionals in training and development, fulfills organizational needs through the timely and effective design/delivery of educational, consulting, and outplacement services.

- Our mission is to continue as the leaders in quality services which benefit individuals and organizations in transition.

This particular mission statement describes TMCI's commitment to provide quality educational and employment-related services to unemployed or underemployed individuals.

In addition to mission statements, companies often use slogans to promote their workers, company, products, services, and commitments to customers. Here are a few recognizable slogans of companies:

"The Power To Be Your Best."
Apple Computer, Inc.

"People Get Into It Because They Get So Much Out Of It."
USA Today

"Something's Happening"
ABC Television Network Group

"Quality Is Job One."
FORD Motor Company

As you can see from these examples, mission statements and slogans vary in length, tone, and purpose depending on the message a company wishes to send to its employees and consumers.

Their Philosophies

Companies' philosophies can sometimes be included in their mission statements; however, their philosophies may warrant a separate page in employee handbooks. Mission statements most likely say what companies do, while their philosophies more often state how it will be done. Companies' philosophies are written for employees who need to know what attitudes and behaviors are expected of them in the workplace.

Here is an illustrative example of a company's philosophy as it may be written in an employee handbook:

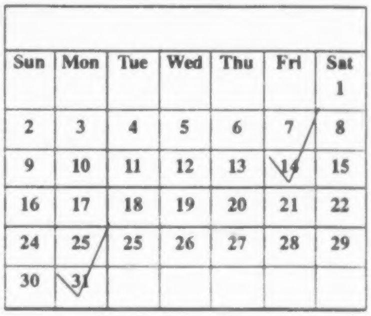
Venture Vitamin Inc.'s Corporate Philosophy

1. Our employees value the ideas, suggestions, and criticisms of Venture Vitamin Inc.'s customers.

2. Our employees adopt participative team-management concepts to secure Venture Vitamin Inc.'s leadership role in the vitamin industry.

3. Our employees invest in ongoing education and training experiences that positively affect the quality of their work.

(Continued on page 3)



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
24	25	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

When Is Payday?

Never assume that payday will occur when you most need money to satisfy your bill collectors. Companies determine when you will be paid, and you will have to learn how to budget your earnings to match the company's schedule of payroll.

For example, you may be paid weekly, every two weeks, semimonthly (15th and last day of the month), monthly, or at the end of a short-term project with special job requirements. It is to your advantage to ask about pay schedules so that you can make adjustments to your spending and saving habits.

Keep in mind that full-time salaried workers do not generally receive overtime pay for hours worked beyond their full-time employment schedule. Full-time hourly workers, however, can most likely receive overtime pay in accordance with the Federal Wage and Hour Law when the overtime was approved by an official of the company.

Whatever an employer's schedule of payroll may be, it is ultimately your responsibility to understand and adjust to the company's system of compensating workers for the jobs they perform.

(Continued from page 2)

4. Our employees respond favorably to new challenges of technology, customer service, and company diversification.

5. Our employees have attained the best consumer-product safety record in the industry.

In summary, you can serve a company and yourself best by researching its history, mission, slogan, and philosophy. This knowledge will benefit you when you approach a company for a job and continue to help you should you become employed.

Questions For You

What You Can Learn About Companies

Hiring Practices

Companies recruit and hire individuals who are qualified to perform various jobs within their organizations. The standards used to evaluate job candidates include a consideration of their education, training, experience, and character. Once employed, these individuals are responsible for notifying the company in writing of any changes in their education and training that may work toward employee promotions.

Questions For You:

1. How do companies evaluate the education, training, experience, and character of prospective employees?

2. What specific actions can employees take to be considered for on-the-job promotions?

Job Posting

Job posting is one technique employers use within the company to advertise openings. Many companies post these job openings on company bulletin boards and/or in company newsletters. An employee handbook may describe the types of jobs that will be made available through the method of job posting, the requirements of the positions, and the procedures of application.

Questions For You:

1. What factors might influence someone already employed to apply for a different position with the company?

2. Besides following the procedures of application, what other steps might an employee undertake to learn more about a new position?

Performance Reviews

Many companies conduct formal reviews of their employees' job performance. The most widely-stated goal of these reviews of employee performance is to build a channel of

(Continued on page 4)

T.G.I.A.H.

Thank Goodness It's A Holiday!

The most often read and cherished section of an employee handbook is the part which describes employee benefits. *Webster's New World Dictionary* defines the word benefit as follows: a kindness or anything that contributes to an improvement in a condition (i.e., You are exhausted by your work, and your employer permits you to schedule a vacation with full pay).

Many individuals do not realize that company contributions to health and life insurance plans and days off with or without pay for holidays, illnesses, and vacations can be described as "kindnesses" extended by employers to their employees. So often, employees take their benefits for granted and do not understand that employers are not obligated to include these benefits in their employment packages.

For example, companies can determine what benefits will be extended to which group(s) of employees. Many companies offer more benefits to full-time employees than their part-time coworkers. In fact, few part-time positions offer benefits other than the hourly wages set for those jobs. Therefore, jobs (part-time or full-time) with benefits can be more difficult to find these days.

Benefit Packages

Some companies offer extensive "benefit packages" to their employees, while other companies have to be more conservative in the number and extent of benefits they can offer. Here is a partial listing of those benefits:

Days off with pay for:

Holidays
Illnesses
Funerals
Personal Business
Vacations

Employee options of:

Medical Insurance Plans

Life Insurance Plans

Pension Plans

Salary Savings Plans

Salary Continuation/Disability Plans

Pregnancy Disability Options

Accidental Death & Dismemberment Plans

Educational Assistance

Training/Development Workshops

(Continued from page 3)

communication between the employer and the employee. Subjects discussed during the employee's review process vary among companies; however, employees' responsibilities and contributions to the company are the most common topics. Employees can generally expect a formal review of their performance once a year unless otherwise stated by the company. The results of these reviews offer companies a basis for transferring, promoting, demoting, or dismissing employees.

Questions For You:

1. Why do many employees fear the performance review process, and what can they do to overcome their fears?

2. What specific types of questions and criteria might be on a performance review report?

Probation Periods

New employees are often subject to probation periods that begin when they are hired and last for a number of months. During this period, employees usually can not take time off with pay, and they can be terminated at any time. Employees need to understand how long their probation periods last and why it is critical for them to demonstrate their value to the company without abusing company policies.

Questions For You:

1. Why do employers have probation periods for new employees?

2. Can you list at least two (2) ways employees can successfully complete a probation period and be considered for more permanent positions?

Work Relationships

Companies grow and succeed whenever there are positive relationships among supervisors, workers, and customers. Employers acknowledge that problems among these groups will occur; therefore, they offer employees avenues to deal with disturbances and differences in the workplace. These avenues are referred to as the "chain-of-command." This is the acceptable procedure that employees are required to follow when dealing with on-the-job responsibilities.

Question For You:

1. How are "chains-of-command" structured, and why is there a need for standard procedures to solve problems on the job?

2. What can happen to employees who do not follow the company's "chain-of-command"?

All of the *"questions for you"* were asked so that you may begin thinking about the world of work. It is important for you to discuss your answers with others who have work experience and understand what employers expect from their employees.

What Are Statutory Benefits?

Social Security, Workers' Compensation, and Unemployment Compensation are statutory benefits that companies provide to certain eligible employees or former employees.

For example, the company and the employee contribute equally to the social-security fund. Then, social-security benefits can be paid to eligible persons on the basis of age or disability.

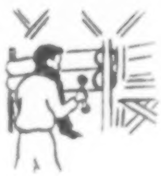
Unemployment Compensation Insurance covers benefits to eligible persons on the basis of certain involuntary job-loss conditions. In Pennsylvania, the company alone contributes to this insurance program; however, other states require employees to also make contributions.

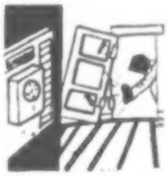
Companies pay the full cost of Workers Compensation Insurance. This insurance covers medical expenses directly associated with on-the-job injury or death and job related illnesses. There is also compensation for lost income during periods of disability and predetermined company payments for permanent disability or death.

The activity which is the subject of this publication was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.

Looking Good, Feeling Good!

Appearance, Conduct, and Work Record





How you should "look" on the job is sometimes described in an employee handbook. Your specific job responsibilities and the standards of dress established by your company and clients will determine what is acceptable attire for you. Some styles of clothing and grooming habits may be classified as improper or unsafe. Newly hired individuals should consult their supervisors and coworkers about appropriate clothing and grooming concerns of the workplace whenever this issue is not addressed in their employee handbook. As a matter of fact, the appearance of employees is so important to some companies that they reserve the right to dismiss workers who do not follow their standards of attire and grooming while on the job.

Dressing properly for the job is not enough to guarantee you'll have an employment history. You will have to be aware of the written and unwritten rules of appropriate business conduct. What would be considered inappropriate conduct? Being at work under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances, using offensive language, and having prolonged and/or unexcused absences from work are, for instance, the more obvious violations of appropriate business conduct. Then, there are the less-publicized misconducts such as loafing on the job, misusing company property (i.e., making personal telephone calls), and making derogatory remarks of a racial, ethnic, religious, or sexual nature. Employee handbooks often address the more obvious rules; nevertheless, violation of the less-publicized rules can be equally disastrous to your career.

What are some of these other less-publicized rules of inappropriate business conduct?

1. Speaking negatively about your company, supervisor, and coworkers, especially when your comments are based on hearsay (rumor and gossip).

2. Deliberately withholding information from your company, supervisor, and coworkers that could affect the quality of work and issues of safety.

3. Compromising the cohesiveness and success of your coworkers by pursuing only self-gratifying projects and work experiences.

4. Addressing work-related issues outside of your job description, level of authority, and expertise.

(Continued on page 7)

STUDENTaccesspage

Focus: Workplace Perceptions

You are being asked to determine if the following statements are true or false. Your answers will most likely be influenced by your previous work experience or what you have learned otherwise about companies and their relationships with employees. We have based our answers on research completed by the editorial staff and reviewed by members of company policy-making positions. Although there may be reasons to interpret these statements differently, PASSAGE has worked to eliminate misrepresentation of laws that govern employment practices in the State of Pennsylvania.

Write T for True and F for False.

1._____An employer must give employees at least Christmas Day off with or without pay whenever this holiday occurs during the company's normal working schedule.

2._____A nondisclosure agreement states that employees must honor the terms of the company's confidentiality policy or face possible termination of employment.

3._____All companies by law must distribute employee handbooks to new employees.

4._____Individuals who are salaried employees are most likely eligible for overtime pay when their work responsibilities go beyond the normal schedule of hours worked per week.

5._____It is not an employee's responsibility to report hazards or accidents in the workplace.

6._____Employees who upgrade their education and training should report this information in writing to their supervisor and/or personnel department.

7._____There are few advantages of knowing a company's mission and philosophy--it's always more important to know how much money the company pays its workers.

8._____Telling jokes of a racial, ethnic, religious, or sexual nature in the workplace can never result in the termination of employees.

9._____Most employers have policies for handling accidents and emergencies in the workplace.

10._____Most companies have a set of "unwritten rules" that guide employee conduct.

11._____Companies cannot enforce dress codes that violate an employee's personal preference of attire even when safety is an issue.

12._____Employees can generally refuse company relocation assignments and not suffer loss of their current positions.

Answers:
1. False 2. True 3. False
4. False 5. False 6. True
7. False 8. False 9. True
10. True 11. False 12. False

On-The-Job Expectations

Time Reports

Every company has a method to track the time employees spend at and away from work. The majority of companies use "time sheets" on which employees and/or their supervisors record information for specific pay periods.

Larger companies, employing many classifications of employees, may have several different time report forms. Smaller-staffed companies may just use one form for all of the employees to record their daily or weekly work schedules.

Some companies have machines (punch cards) which automatically record and report the employees' time at work. Other companies, doing confidential business (i.e., defense industry), may have guards and electronic equipment that monitor the whereabouts and time schedules of their employees.

Time reports are official documents that are used as evidence of employees' wages, benefits, and overall work habits (i.e., record of tardiness, absences, and illnesses). Falsely reporting information on a time report is a serious violation of company standards. You should always keep a personal account of your time at work in lieu of mistakes made by the company or you on official time reports.

(Continued from page 5)

5. Accepting positions and roles outside of work which are in direct conflict with your company's ethics and values.

6. Using any degree of company time, equipment, and supplies to further your own personal gain.

What you "learn" about a company from its employee handbook, through observation, and by using common sense will help you adjust to the world of work. Each day on the job should offer you ways to think about how you can strive toward employment security while you adhere to both the written and unwritten rules of the company.

Nondisclosure Agreements

Your Signature--Your Word!

Some of you may secure employment with a company that requires you to sign a nondisclosure agreement. This paper will most likely detail what information (projects, financial reports) about the company you may not discuss with others including friends and relatives. Be aware that most companies have sensitive information you are asked (a verbal contract) to keep confidential even though you have not signed a non-disclosure agreement. Violation of a company 's confidentiality, whether written or unwritten, can result in termination of your employment.

Classifying Workers

Employment Status

Will you be a full-time/regular, full-time/short-term, part-time/regular, or part-time/short-term worker? Confused? Let's try to unravel the facts behind the subject of employment status.

Fact one: Full-time employment for Pennsylvania's companies and organizations begins with the minimum work week of 30 hours and extends upward to 40+ hours for many salaried and hourly workers. Most companies have traditionally followed a 37.5 to 40 hours per week schedule to define the status of full-time employment.

Fact two: Part-time employment status is less-structured in terms of minimum hours scheduled for work. Hypothetically,

(Continued on last page)

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This newsletter was produced internally by The Midland Center, Inc., 617 Midland Avenue, Midland, PA 15059.

1-800-345-5443 (PA Toll-Free)
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a person who works at least one (1) paid hour a week is considered a part-time employee.

Regular vs. Short-term: The length of anticipated employment (generally, a minimum length of one year) at hiring generally determines if individuals are classified as either regular or short-term employees. For instance, some employees may be hired to work full-time (37.5 to 40 hours) on a short-term project (i.e., a project lasting several weeks or months but less than one (1) year); therefore, they may be classified as full-time/short-term employees. On the other hand, part-time/regular employees are generally scheduled for less than the 40 or 37.5 hours per workweek, but they will be employed for periods longer than one year.

Most individuals strive to secure full-time/regular positions with one company; however, others are forced (because of economic conditions) or attracted (for personal reasons) to short-term positions with one or more companies. Your future employment status will hopefully be aligned with your education, training, experience, and financial commitments.

BCALMC
PASSAGE NEWSLETTER
617 MIDLAND AVENUE
MIDLAND, PA 15059

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PASSAGE

"Your workplace and job skills information newsletter"

May 1991

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PASSAGE

"YOUR WORKPLACE AND JOB SKILLS INFORMATION NEWSLETTER" JUNE, 1991

Enough Talk About Computers?

In a brainstorming session for this issue of PASSAGE, the editorial staff reviewed topics that were covered over the past nine months. During this monthly review process, one of the editors (we won't say which one) made the comment, "Maybe we should avoid talking about computers and careers that relate to the use of computers for awhile. It seems like every issue focuses on computers."

The point was well taken, and we proceeded with our meeting. New assignments were made, and we started to work. All was well until we got into the middle of our research and realized that there is no way we can avoid talking about computers. Nearly every career field or vocation we highlight in PASSAGE requires, or will require, employees to be knowledgeable of computers. There's no escape!

So, at the risk of being repetitive, the PASSAGE staff would like to give you this one piece of advice--"Don't run from computers; embrace them." You will thank yourself for making the effort, and you will be more competitive and adaptable in today's job market.

P.S. See page five for an article on desktop publishing. Do you need to understand computers to work in this area of expertise? Yes, most definitely! (See what we mean?)

The PASSAGE Editorial Staff

A Unique Partnership

Need Help Finding A Job? Try The Library!

PITTSBURGH
PARTNERSHIP
JOB TRAINING THAT WORKS

Wander into almost any library, and you will find a book on how to write a resume. Wander into three branches of The Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, and you will not only find a resume-preparation book, but you will also find a computer that will produce a first-rate copy of your resume and a trained staff to help you identify the right places to send it!

The Carnegie Library and the City of Pittsburgh have entered into a unique partnership to form the only neighborhood-employment project to be situated in a public-library system. The three sites chosen for the pilot project already have in place a free employment-support program called WORKPLACE. In addition to the extensive collection of job and career materials related to the WORKPLACE project, the three library sites form a string of neighboring communities not currently served by any of the city's other community-based employment projects. JOBNET (Joint Oakland-Based Neighborhoods Employment Team) serves a section of Pittsburgh from the Hill District through Oakland and south to Greenfield and Hazelwood. The Oakland area, with its hospitals, universities, and high-tech centers, sits at the center of the neighborhoods.

The three library sites have in place a variety of computerized career-direction programs. These programs include DISCOVER, a self-directed career guidance program, and PENNSYLVANIA CAREERS, an up-to-the minute listing of pay scales along with job descriptions.

Each library has extensive written materials on careers, education, interviewing techniques, and related topics, as well as video cassettes and audio tapes. In addition, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry sends job listings via microfiche, and JOBNET's own job developer is rapidly making contacts in the community so clients can be placed in suitable jobs.

The project relies heavily on the adult librarians already in place at each site who are assisted by specially hired part-time clerks. The JOBNET personnel team is rounded out by a project

(Continued on page 2)

Qualities Of Teachers

If you are considering a career in teaching, answer the following interesting questions:

- Would I prefer to work with elementary, secondary, or adult learners? Give reasons for your answer.
- How would I expect to handle students with negative attitudes and behaviors that affect their learning as well as the education of their classmates? State some approaches which require common sense and patience.
- Could I encourage students to share their ideas and questions? Explain how you might achieve this goal.
- What could I do to make learning interesting? Pick one subject and tell how you would make it more interesting for students.
- When would I know if my students were learning? Do not use the results of student test scores as your answer.

Quotes (Part II)

"We cannot do everything at once, but we can do something at once."
Calvin Coolidge

"Progress always involves risk. You can't steal second with your foot on first."
Mary R.

"Great works are performed not by strength but by perseverance."
Samuel Johnson

"Not to decide is to decide."
Harvey Cox

"Whether you think you can or whether you think you can't--you are right."
Henry Ford

(Continued from page 1)

manager, project coordinator, and part-time job developer. The board is made up of community-based organizations representing the five neighborhoods.

JOBNET is the logical outcome of the librarians' specialty of information gathering and dissemination and the great demand for job-related information centered in the community. Librarians are committed to serving their neighborhoods. What better service than helping a single parent enroll in a city-sponsored vocational program or seeing that a resident without transportation lands a job within walking distance of home? JOBNET is truly a Pittsburgh Partnership!

by Marlene Demarest, JOBNET Project Coordinator

More information about JOBNET can be obtained by writing to: Marlene Demarest, JOBNET Project Coordinator, JOBNET, 4748 Monongahela Street, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15207.

Would You Like To Be A Teacher?

The Challenges and Rewards

If you have ever been excited about learning, most likely a special teacher was somehow responsible for your enthusiasm to gain new knowledge and skills. To become a successful teacher, you must also be interested in helping students enjoy and appreciate learning.

In addition, to qualify for most public and private school teaching positions, you must be willing to acquire at least a four-year degree from an accredited teacher-training program offered by many colleges throughout Pennsylvania. (Some institutions of higher education are now lengthening their teacher-education programs to five years.)

An Overview

Teaching is one of the most challenging and rewarding careers an individual can pursue. Teachers have many responsibilities determined by what age groups and subjects they have to teach. Although all students share some common characteristics, their needs, abilities, attitudes, and behaviors vary; therefore, teachers must be well prepared and motivated to assume their teaching responsibilities.

Perhaps some of the more common goals of teachers can help you decide if you are sincerely interested in pursuing a teaching career. For example, teachers strive to develop good study habits in their students. This requires that teachers learn different instructional methods which can help students comprehend and remember what they have been taught in their classes. Teachers study "student-learning styles" in college and later have opportunities to utilize what they have learned with their students.

A proper evaluation of student performance and potential is another goal which teachers must attain whenever they accept the responsibility of teaching. Teachers must learn how to test their students' abilities, knowledge, and skills. The results of these

(Continued on page 3)

Develop Your E.B.P.

Do you have Extra Business Perception (E.B.P.)? Of course you do! Everyone has E.B.P. In fact, many successful business people make a conscious effort to develop and fine tune this skill, and they learn how to use it to their best advantage in the work world!

So, what exactly is E.B.P.? Basically, it is the ability to communicate beyond words with individuals in our environment (coworkers, customers, and family). E.B.P. is the willingness to tune into and understand people intensely and carefully.

Here are some suggestions that can help you develop or enhance your E.B.P. in school and on the job:

- **Repeat** what is said by someone before responding. This shows that you are listening and you care about what they have to say.
- **Listen and watch** for the main point or focus of the message when meeting with an individual. Watch while you listen, and use your skills to understand what is the most important part of the message (the bottom line).
- **Be aware** of the general atmosphere and mood among people when you are in a meeting. This will help you when you approach the group and present your ideas.
- **Smile** while you are listening. This may seem strange at first, but people will talk more openly if they sense a happy listener.
- **Convey** your interest in the message being sent by using body language. Nod, watch, and lean forward when listening.

*Adapted from **The Business of Listening** by Paul Pearsall, Ph.D.*

(Continued from page 2)

tests (evaluations) must be carefully interpreted. These results must then be used to design appropriate lesson plans for their students.

Most importantly, teachers must have patience and be understanding. Younger and older students alike bring their concerns to the classroom. Responsible teachers welcome opportunities to help their students overcome barriers which keep them from learning and progressing. For example, teachers must practice good listening skills and discover ways to provide extra support for students with social and/or academic problems that are affecting their educational development.

Finally, teachers must encourage lifelong education goals for their students and themselves. Helping students acquire new skills, explore ideas and concepts, and apply what they have learned takes on special meaning whenever teachers personally practice this philosophy and seek educational experiences throughout their own lives.

Employment Outlook

Growth and job opportunities in the teaching professions vary among Pennsylvania's public and private education systems. Some school systems might pay beginning teachers between $16,000 and $18,500 while others pay more or less money for similar teaching responsibilities; regardless of beginning teachers' salaries, most full-time teaching positions offer employee benefits such as pension and health insurance plans.

Research shows that growth in elementary and special education positions is above average, whereas the growth in secondary teaching positions is only average except for certain academic disciplines such as science and math. While many colleges advertise for instructors, these institutions generally prefer to hire individuals with teaching experience and the minimum of a master's degree.

Adult-education instructors are employed to help teach individuals who have not completed high school and may need to learn and relearn basic skills to acquire the General Education Development (GED) diploma. Adult literacy education centers across the Commonwealth also hire individuals who are qualified to teach adult learners how to read, write, and master other important life and employment skills.

Summary

Excellent teachers will always be needed to prepare children and adults for tomorrow's higher education, training, and work environments. Teaching others "how to learn", "why learning is necessary", and "what needs to be learned" have always been important goals of teachers. All three goals work in unison to bring meaning and value to the teaching profession.

One way you can easily discover your feelings about becoming a teacher is to spend time as a volunteer in an educational setting. Many schools welcome community volunteers who are interested in helping young, adolescent, or older students discover the excitement and benefits of learning. This hands-on approach will help you make a responsible decision about whether or not you will take the steps needed to become a teacher.

Responding To Help-Wanted Signs

All of us, at one time or another, have seen help-wanted signs displayed in windows or on bulletin boards. Many small businesses such as restaurants and shops use this method of "job posting" as a way of advertising their job openings.

If you are presently conducting a job search and you see a help-wanted sign that announces a job opening that interests you, be sure that you are prepared before you inquire about that position.

Here are some guidelines that you can follow when you respond to a help-wanted display:

- **Read** the sign carefully before you call or visit the potential employer. If the sign includes a telephone number, write it down and then call for an appointment. If there is no telephone number listed on the sign, you can visit without an appointment.
- **Dress** appropriately when you meet with the employer. Be concerned with the image you convey to the interviewer.
- **Be prepared** for an interview. Be ready to answer questions about your education and job experience.
- **Expect** to fill out a job application form when you meet the potential employer. Have the necessary information ready to complete the application (references, addresses, telephone numbers, social-security number, etc.).

By doing your homework and being prepared, you can increase your chances of securing employment.

Adapted from ***Work-Wise - Tactics for Job Success*** *by Contemporary Books, Inc.*

A Special Service

The Center On Deafness

CENTER ON DEAFNESS

The Center On Deafness at the Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf provides a broad spectrum of services, including job search and career development, to persons of all ages who are deaf/hearing impaired. Established in 1986 as an expansion of the Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf program for school-age deaf children, the Center offers quality programs to meet the needs of the deaf/hearing-impaired population, primarily in the western Pennsylvania area.

Job-Placement Service

One of the most successful programs at the Center is the Job-Placement Service. Clients who use this service are provided with pre-placement counseling, job-selection assistance, on-the-job support, and follow-up counseling. Employers also receive an introduction to hearing impairment as well as ongoing support from the Center's coordinator.

In order to strengthen this program and to meet the needs of the deaf employees, hearing coworkers, and employers, a Workforce Literacy grant was sought to expand the services already in place. In a project initiated through a 353 grant entitled Workforce Literacy for Hearing-Impaired Employees, Adult Literacy Instructor Sandra Mertens visits work sites and identifies literacy demands. Then she designs and implements strategies that benefit deaf employees, coworkers, and employers. Ms. Mertens meets with the hearing-impaired employee and his/her employer and tries to assess the situations at each work site so that problems don't arise. In most cases, this approach includes teaching several sign-language classes to coworkers and supervisors and incorporating the vocabulary that is needed at the particular work site.

After the initial visit, Ms. Mertens compiles one list of words that are important for the client to know immediately and another list of words/signs for coworkers so that some basic communication can occur from the very beginning of the work experience. She then reviews words with these individuals, or groups, to assure that a certain comfort level exists. Some short-term strategies are then developed to meet unique workplace needs. For example, clients who work in a hospital setting have different literacy needs than those who work at a fast-food restaurant. In order to provide support and encouragement for the employee, Ms. Mertens does "whatever is needed."

Sessions vary according to site and employee needs. If a deaf employee can't read an instructional manual, Ms. Mertens may be called in to rewrite the information so that comprehension of the content is accomplished. This program has been quite successful since it meets the needs of both employee and employer.

Transitional-Instructional Program

For clients who are still not prepared to make a decision regarding a career, the Center also provides a Transitional-Instructional

(Continued on page 5)

The Importance Of Saying Thank You

The thank-you letter is an important and often overlooked job-search tool that can help you increase your chances of securing employment.

After each interview, be sure to send a brief thank-you letter to the interviewer. In fact, at some point in your job search, a thank-you letter may be the deciding factor which lands you a job.

What exactly is the purpose of a thank-you letter? The thank-you letter can:

- **Give** you the opportunity to reinforce your strengths and skills (education and work experience).
- **Serve** as a reminder to the interviewer of your interest in the position and your appreciation of the interviewer's time and consideration.
- **Offer** you the opportunity to include any information that you forgot to mention in the interview.
- **Give** you a competitive edge over job candidates who did not send a letter.
- **Reveal** your professional manner and persistence to the potential employer.

See the STUDENTaccesspage for tips on preparing thank-you letters.

(Continued from page 4)

Program. This program is designed to provide deaf/hearing-impaired clients with training geared toward increasing the possibility of acceptance into a college program or improved employability. The Transitional-Instructional Program includes: (1) a three-week summer Diagnostic Evaluation Period, followed by (2) a Training Session of six weeks to eight months in either a "Pre-Vocational" or "Pre-College" program.

Reading Program

Another valuable program offered by the Center is the weekly adult-literacy class. This program provides a service to hearing-impaired adults who want to improve their reading skills.

As noted by the variety of programs described, the Center On Deafness is committed to providing a wide spectrum of educational and career opportunities for the deaf adult population in western Pennsylvania.

by Rosemary P. Garrity, Administrator, Center On Deafness

For more information about the Center On Deafness and its services, call (412) 244-4228 or write to: Rosemary P. Garrity, Administrator, Center On Deafness, 300 Swissvale Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15218.

Technology

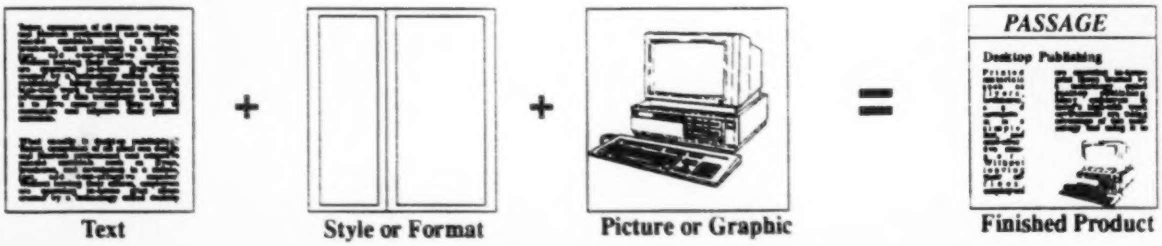
Desktop Publishing In The Workplace

Today, companies of all sizes can design and produce professional and attractive printed materials such as flyers, brochures, and newsletters in a simple, fast, and cost-effective manner. Without leaving their offices, employees are operating in-house print shops created by a technology called desktop publishing. Many employers in today's high-tech work environment are taking advantage of this technology and using it to save money and time and to customize and improve their printed materials.

What exactly is desktop publishing? Desktop publishing is the term or title given to computer-software programs that provide their operators (users) with the tools needed to create quality documents or publications in a short period of time. Desktop publishing programs allow their users to combine text and graphics in a variety of formats (i.e., number of columns). Skilled users can create documents that look like they came from a print shop. See example below.

(Continued on page 7)

Desktop Publishing Combines... To Create...



STUDENTaccesspage

Focus: Thank-You Letters

In this month's STUDENTaccesspage, we would like to discuss the ingredients of a good thank-you letter and review some guidelines that you can follow when preparing a thank-you letter. For additional information on the purpose of thank-you letters, see page five.

Ingredients and Guidelines

- **Write** a thank-you letter the day or the day after you have an interview. Include the date that the letter was written.
- **Insert** an inside address. The inside address should include the interviewer's name and title (be sure you have the correct spellings), name of the company, street, city, state, and proper zip code.
- **Include** a salutation. It should always be addressed to the interviewer (i.e., Dear Mr. Smith).
- **Make** sure the letter is no more than three paragraphs in length. Most employers will not take the time to read a lengthy thank-you note. A concise letter will have more impact.
- **Include** the date and time that you attended the interview. Also, the position you seek should be highlighted in the letter. In a situation where an employer interviewed many individuals, this information will serve as an immediate reminder to him/her.
- **Summarize** your skills and experience and state any contributions you can make as an employee of the organization; however, do not have this information appear like it is a duplicate copy of your resume.
- **Insert** your name, address, and telephone number.

***Although some employers accept handwritten thank-you notes, we suggest that you type each thank-you letter. This projects a more professional image to the potential employer.*

Sample Thank-You Letter

June 30, 1991

Mr. Robert Smith
Personnel Director
ABC Corporation
123 North Avenue
Mayberry, Pennsylvania 19191

Dear Mr. Smith:

I appreciated the opportunity to meet with you on Wednesday, June 29, 1991, and to discuss the receptionist's position that is available at the ABC Corporation. The interview enabled me to understand the requirements and expectations of this position and the company's daily operations.

Once again, I would like to express my interest in the receptionist's position at the ABC Corporation. I am confident that my five years of experience in this field and my responsible work habits can benefit your organization and its mission.

If there is any additional information that you require regarding my qualifications for this position, please contact me. Thank you for your time and consideration; I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Beatrice Taylor
987 Maple Street
Mount Pilot, Pennsylvania 18181
(909) 333-1212

Desktop Publishing Resources

If you are interested in learning more about desktop publishing and design, the following resources may be of great interest to you. These resources can be found at your local library or bookstore.

Looking Good In Print: A Guide To Basic Design For Desktop Publishing by Roger C. Parker--This book summarizes the basic principles of design that you need to produce attractive and professional printed materials on a computer.

Desktop Publishing With Style by Daniel Will-Harris--With so many types of computers, printers, and desktop-publishing programs available, deciding what equipment and programs you need can be difficult. This book reviews equipment and software and serves as a helpful reference when making a purchase.

Basic Desktop Design And Layout by David Collier and Bob Cotton--A guide that lists hundreds of examples for desktop-publishing users who would like to learn the basics of design. Also, a step-by-step checklist is given to help you improve your layout and design skills.

Ready-To-Use Layouts For Desktop Design by David Collier and Kay Floyd--This publication lists over 300 useful and professional layouts for creating your own letterhead, price lists, catalogs, brochures, advertisements, newsletters, forms, books, and reports.

The Makeover Book: 101 Design Solutions For Desktop Publishing by Roger C. Parker--In this book, the author presents "before and after" makeovers of printed materials such as advertisements, brochures, flyers, newsletters, catalogs, business correspondence, charts, and graphs. Also, techniques and guidelines to make your work more attractive are discussed.

(Continued from page 5)

The tools needed to create these quality materials include a computer, laser printer, and desktop publishing and word processing software. That's it! Everything that was once done by cutting, pasting, and drawing can now be done on the computer screen. A job that could at one time only be completed by art directors, design professionals, or typesetters can now be completed by the average person (with some training and practice) in the office or home.

Printed materials that are produced using desktop publishing systems are everywhere. In fact, PASSAGE is an example of a publication that was produced using a desktop-publishing software called Xerox Ventura Publisher 2.0 (one of many types of desktop-publishing software available).

Each issue of PASSAGE is typed in a word-processing package on a computer. The information is then saved in the computer and transferred to the desktop-publishing program which is linked to the word-processing program. In desktop, the text is placed in our customized two-column format where changes to its appearance are made (e.g., size of text, placement of graphics, bolding and italicizing text, etc.). When the newsletter is finished (a camera-ready copy), it is sent to the printer, and copies are made.

The advantages of using desktop publishing are many and include:

- **Saving time.** Before desktop publishing, individuals who wanted quality printed materials would have to run back and forth between the office and print shop for all editing changes that needed to be made to their materials. Now, all changes can be make quickly on the computer, and the final copy can then be sent to the printer.
- **Saving money.** Depending on the size of the project, printed materials can be designed and produced in-house or camera-ready proofs can be made in-house and then sent to the printer for mass-production. Both approaches can save money.
- **Establishing more control over the look and feel of printed materials.** Organizations are concerned with presenting a specific image to their publics, and desktop publishing enables them to make certain that their image is consistent.
- **Creating materials that are impressive and easy to read.** With the variety of type styles and layout choices available, desktop publishing can make ordinary documents (letters or reports) more professional and attractive.
- **Making changes or revisions to old documents is easy.** All documents can be saved on the computer and updated at any time. Documents such as price lists that need to be updated every month can be stored in the computer, retrieved at a later date, and revised in a matter of minutes.
- **Maintaining confidentiality.** Many companies would prefer to design their documents in-house rather than risk the possibility of information leaking to outside sources.

(Continued on last page)

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This newsletter was produced internally by The Midland Center, Inc., 617 Midland Avenue, Midland, PA 15059.

1-800-345-5443 (PA Toll-Free)
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The activity which is the subject of this publication was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.

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Many innovative companies are having their employees use desktop publishing to produce employee newsletters, manuals, price lists, proposals, transparencies, office forms, brochures, and many other types of printed materials. Larger companies often hire individuals whose job responsibilities are to prepare various printed materials using desktop publishing. Medium to small companies are more likely to hire individuals who can complete a variety of tasks such as writing, word processing, managing a data base, and desktop publishing. Acquiring a variety of skills that complement desktop publishing is always an advantage for job hopefuls in this career field.

What types of skills are needed by the desktop-publishing user? Individuals operating a desktop-publishing system should have an eye for layout and design. With all of the design options and special features, an inexperienced user can easily turn a document into a designer's nightmare. Solid grammatical and proofreading skills are a definite advantage. These skills will be needed if the operator has to edit text. In smaller companies, the person operating the desktop-publishing system often acts as the designer, writer, and editor. Finally, an understanding of the basic operations of the computer is important. Knowing what the machine's capabilities and limitations are helps the user maintain an efficient operation.

If you are interested in learning more about desktop publishing and how it is used in the workplace, there are many resources you can access to obtain more information. The first and most obvious source is the library. The library has many books and magazines on this subject. Believe it or not, there are two magazines that are dedicated completely to desktop publishing, and they are **Publish** and **Publish It**. Another source would be area computer-training centers that teach desktop-publishing courses. In addition, you could contact stores that sell computers and software. PASSAGE suggests that you research all sources to get a better understanding of this technology and career field.

See the sidebar on page seven for information on desktop publishing and design resources.

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MIDLAND, PA 15059

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"Your workplace and job skills information newsletter"

June 1991

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